NEW!

EVERY PLAYSTATION 2 LAUNCH GAME - PAGE 70

PSM2

PLAY[illegible]STATION 2 LONGER, HARD[illegible]ER

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ONLY IN PSM2

40 pages of the greatest new PlayStation 2 games!

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WILD WILD RACING
SMUGGLER'S RUN
MIDNIGHT CLUB
SILPHEED
G-SAVIOUR

SSX

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GRAN TURISMO 3

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NEW GAMES!

EVERY PLAYSTATION 2 GAME IN THIS ISSUE OF PSM2

SSX-BOMB: We're impressed by EA's masterful snowboarding experience. Very impressed. See PSM2's game of the month on pg16.

GAME NAME	PAGE	SECTION
Aliens: Colonial Marines	28	Previews
Angelique Trois	69	Previews
AquaAqua	51	Previews
	79	Feature
The Bouncer	30	Previews
Circus Maximus	28	Previews
Commandos 2	66	Previews
Cool Boarders: Code Alien	67	Previews
Dance Summit 2001	67	Previews
Disney's Dinosaur	79	Feature
Dynasty Warriors 2	73	Feature
	109	Tips
Eternal Ring	79	Feature
Evergrace	79	Feature
F1 Championship 2000	75	Feature
Fantavision	78	Feature
FIFA 2001	77	Feature
G-Saviour	100	Reviews
Gift	69	Previews
Gitaru-Man	69	Previews
Goemon	69	Previews
Gradius 3 & 4	76	Feature
Gran Turismo 3	40	Previews
International Track & Field	77	Feature
ISS	77	Feature
Kengo	67	Previews
Kessen 2	69	Previews
KeyboardMania	101	Reviews
Klonoa 2	58	Previews
The Lost	27	Previews
Madden NFL 2001	77	Feature
Midnight Club	96	Reviews
	75	Feature
	109	Tips
Moto GP	52	Previews
NHL 2001	77	Feature
Oni	60	Previews
Rayman Revolution	79	Feature
RC Revenge Pro	75	Feature
Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2	46	Previews
	73	Feature
Red Faction	48	Previews
Rhapsody	69	Previews
Ridge Racer 5	74	Feature
Saffire	68	Previews
Seven	69	Previews
Shadow of Memories	56	Previews
Silent Hill 2	36	Previews
Silent Scope	88	Reviews
Silpheed	98	Reviews
Sky Gunner	28	Previews
Sky Odyssey	67	Previews
Sky Surfer	77	Feature
Smuggler's Run	92	Reviews
	75	Feature
	109	Tips
SSX	16	Feature
	76	Feature
Street Fighter EX3	73	Feature
	108	Tips
Super Bust-A-Move	79	Feature
Tekken Tag Tournament	112	Tips
	72	Feature
TimeSplitters	62	Previews
	76	Feature
Top Gear Dare Devil	75	Feature
Unreal Tournament	44	Previews
Wild Wild Racing	82	Reviews
	75	Feature
WipEout Fusion	126	Interview
Wolverine	27	Previews
X Squad	76	Feature

What PSM2 stands for...

If you're reading this, you, like us, clearly give a damn about the little details. It's that level of detail which PSM2 is all about. We want to show you what it's like to feel the rain on the screen in *Metal Gear Solid 2*, watch the sun set on your village in *Dark Cloud*, and floor an Audi TT around central London in *The Getaway*. PSM2's all about cracking 268 in *Tekken Bowl*, getting a review score totally *right*, staying up too late and the brilliance of THAT blue light. It's your fat-free guide to the Emotion Engine experience.

What PSM2 isn't about, is piss-poor, seen-it-before features on girls 'n' games or game violence. It's not about *those Japs* being mad or D-list celebrities playing some random game. Instead, we'll cut out the usual clichéd trash and get on with the stuff that matters to PS2 people.

We know more than anyone else about PS2 and PS2 gaming, and all the journalists that write for the magazine are the most informed and passionately honest game fans you'll meet. PSM2 plays longer, harder, faster than any other mag. You won't be bored for a second.

PSM2 COVER GAME

VERY BIG THINGS ARE STARTING TO HAPPEN ON PS2. SOFTWARE IS AT LAST BEGINNING TO SHINE.

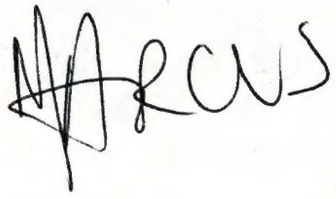
We're less than a month away from the European debut of truly the most important games console – sorry, *Computer Entertainment System* – in history, and, it seems, Western development teams are leading the software revolution.

Our cover game this issue is a perfect example. No Japanese release has yet come close to capturing what PlayStation 2 is about in the way *SSX* does. Mixing silky-smooth downhill speed with free-flowing tricks and a rock-solid level of challenge, it's the game that's captivated the PSM2 team more than any other. The level of shouting in the office is an indication of how much this game gets under your skin.

Then there's the likes of *TimeSplitters* and *Unreal Tournament* – two gripping first-person shooters that show glimpses of genius in their level and weapon design. Brilliant.

It won't always be this way though. The Japanese are coming. And they're bringing *Gran Turismo 3*, *Moto GP* and *The Bouncer* with them. This issue we bring you new shots and details on these three major titles.

Head on over to pg16 to find out why – if you haven't already done so – you need to get your order in for a PS2... **PSM2**



Marcus Hawkins Editor
marcus.hawkins@futurenet.co.uk

IN A NUTSHELL

PSM2 is...

... intelligent, enthusiastic, comprehensive, escapist, entertaining. Japanese savvy, it's written and read by committed gamers and is passionately honest about PlayStation 2. It also likes to make its readers laugh out loud.

PSM2 is...

... the place to come for the quirky and non-mainstream side of PlayStation 2, as well as the big name games. It knows as much about *Baki the Grappler* as it does about *Tekken Tag* – if you read PSM2 you *will* know more.

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE

PSM2

CONTENTS

スカラシサ

PLAYING PS2 LONGER, HARDER, FASTER

タテイスカンチニシミモ

PSM2 COVER GAME

SSX: "No other console could handle its sprawling horizons - *SSX* takes you high, hits you hard"

PAGE 16 THE BEST GAME ON PS2

It's vast. It's fast. SSX has got *everything* and we can't stop playing it. Our review will take you down every slope, through the short-cuts and into a massive 360°. You will be amazed.

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2 ..... PAGE 46
Get in the ring, with the funniest, punchiest fighter on PS2.

TIMESPLITTERS ..... PAGE 62
New in-game footage, and *all* the gameplay details.

SMUGGLER'S RUN ..... PAGE 92
Speed and thievery - but is it a steal... or a rip-off?

SILENT SCOPE ..... PAGE 88
The essential verdict on this blasting arcade conversion.

WILD WILD RACING ..... PAGE 82
Rage's mucky racer gets judged for pace, fun and dirt.

10 PAGES OF PS2 LAUNCH GAMES
Blasttt off on pg70...

RED FACTION ..... PAGE 48
First PlayStation 2 shots of the Mars-based shoot-em-up.

CONTENTS

"29 GAMES AVAILABLE ON DAY ONE" – LET'S DO LAUNCH, SEE PG70

SILENT HILL 2.....PAGE 36
The horror becomes reality. Incredible new screenshots!

UNREAL TOURNAMENT.....PAGE 44
We play the slickest, bloodiest Deathmatch yet. Ouch.

THE BOUNCER.....PAGE 30
We unveil the combat, the characters, the plot and more.

MOTO GP.....PAGE 52
PS2's brilliantly realistic bike racer gets a road-test.

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT.....PAGE 112
The last part of our pro guide to mangling your mates.

PAGE 40 GRAN TURISMO 3

The name's changed, but it looks more stunning than ever. Brand new, unseen shots and the latest spec on our most wanted racer!

>INDEX シクヨク

THIS MONTH IN PSM2

10 GLOBAL

PS2 DROUGHT.....12
American gamers get a shock as Sony delivers half the promised number of units, sparking rumours of DVD delay.

PS2 ads.....13
History promo.....13
Rumours.....13
Peripheral prices.....14
Tomb Raider movie news.....14
UK B-Boy Championships.....14
Bytesize.....14

26 COMING SOON

THE BOUNCER.....30
More details break on Square's hugely anticipated thug epic. All the news, all the shots.

GT3.....40
Incredible new in-game shots, plus the latest developments.

Silent Hill 2.....36
Unreal Tournament.....44
Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2.....46
Red Faction.....48
AquaAqua.....51
Moto GP.....52
Shadow of Memories.....56
Klonoa 2.....58
Oni.....60
TimeSplitters.....62
Commandos 2.....66
Dance Summit 2001.....67
Twisted Metal Black.....67
Kengo.....67
Sky Odyssey.....67
Cool Boarders: Code Alien.....67
Saffire.....68

EVERY ISSUE

Defining Moment.....6
Letters.....8
Subscriptions.....120
Technology Laboratory.....123
Bog Read.....124
Next Issue.....129
The Last Laugh.....130

16 FEATURES

SSX.....16
Our huge 10-page review of Electronic Arts' startling downhill snow-racer, with *all* the info and shots you need, plus an interview with its creators. You really can't afford to miss it.

BLASHTT OFF!.....70
It all starts here! Every PS2 launch title assessed – we give you the complete run-down of every disc that'll be available for PS2 Day One.

INTERVIEWS

Jonnie Hardstaff *History*.....13
SSX's Development Team.....24
Rob Francis *WipEout Fusion* 126

80 REVIEWS

WILD WILD RACING.....82
It's fast and filthy with a touch of class, but we'll tell you if it should be first game on your shopping list.

SILENT SCOPE.....88
From the arcade to PS2 – we see if a huge gun's all that's been lost in translation.

Smuggler's Run.....92
Midnight Club.....96
Silpheed.....98
G-Saviour.....100
Keyboard Mania.....101

108 TIPS

TEKKEN TAG.....112
The third, and final, part of our pro tips, with new moves for the unlockable characters.

Street Fighter EX3.....108
Dynasty Warriors 2.....109
Midnight Club.....109
Smuggler's Run.....109

DVD
THE PICK OF THIS MONTH'S DVD RELEASES REVIEWED.....102
Total Film Magazine provides your essential buying guide. You get expert movie advice and the most out of your new PS2.

PSONE REVIEWS 104
Your backward compatible guide to this month's cream of the PSone crop, including Medal of Honor: Underground, Spyro 3 and Incredible Crisis

ON THE COVER

16 SSX
The fastest, sharpest, grooviest launch game gets 10-pages of detailed analysis. From the mercury-quick courses to the stomach-wrenching airborne tricks.

40 GRAN TURISMO 3
Our most wanted next-gen racer just got better. Go and see for yourself.

70 BLASHTT OFF!
Take one spanking new machine and the choice of 29 shiny new games. You need our indispensable guide to the potential giants and lemons of PlayStation 2.

92 SMUGGLER'S RUN
Morally wrong, but ace fun. Full review inside.

ISSUE #03
SSX...
Your one-stop guide to PlayStation 2 delivers you you're one-stop guide to one of the best launch titles.

DEFINING MOMENT

THAT SPARK OF GENIUS THAT CAN ONLY BE PS2...

#03: WHEN YOU WANDER OFF-PISTE IN SSX

Out of all the launch games *SSX* is the one title that gives you a glimmer of how PlayStation 2 will change the way we play forever. Its freeform action opens up a whole vista of cool possibilities...

- **Name** Daniel Dawkins
- **Age** 25
- **Occupation** Staff Writer, PSM2 Magazine
- **Why is this the Defining Moment of PlayStation 2 for you this month?**

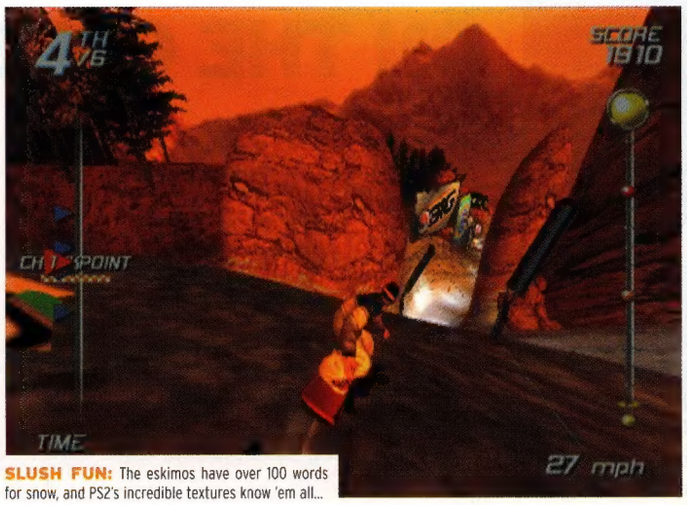
We all know that PS2 games look gorgeous, but will they be anything more than tarted-up PSone games? *SSX* provides the answer with its gigantic go-anywhere, try-anything courses. While track markers show one way down each slope, whether you cut across unspolit powder or take the direct route via potentially lethal leaps is up to you. What it suggests is that PS2 is capable of creating amazing virtual worlds where we can do, pretty much, what we like.

- **What other things have impressed you about PS2 so far?**

The level of detail that's been crammed into many games is just astounding. Heads swivel, expressions change and particles sizzle. Magic. **PSM2**

THE HOT RAIL: If it's level and solid, then you can bet you'll get a sparking grind out of it. Head for impossible targets... you'll be shocked by the scale of the environments.

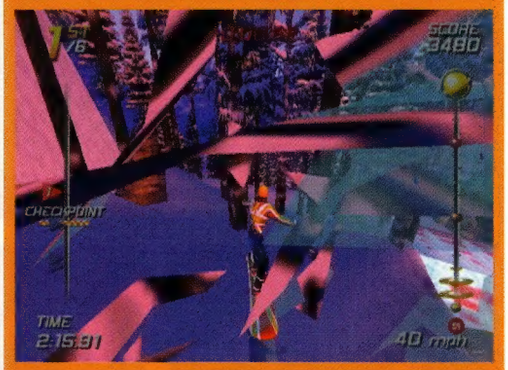
"GIGANTIC GO-ANYWHERE, TRY-ANYTHING COURSES... PS2 CREATES AMAZING WORLDS"



SLUSH FUN: The eskimos have over 100 words for snow, and PS2's incredible textures know 'em all...

KILLER SEQUENCE!

Before you even begin to get over the sheer speed and beautiful textures of *SSX*, the Elysium Alps course ambushes you with some insane turns and breath-robbing jumps. The real shock comes, however, when you smash through a glass hoarding into deep powder and find yourself literally flying over a section of the course below towards the bottom of a sheer chasm. Later you realise that given the right line, and some seat-of-your-pants reactions, this is a relatively safe route to follow – but that doesn't stop your heart from damn-near packing up the first time you try it.



AIR-RAISING: Videogaming just doesn't get much more dramatic than this. *SSX* packs incredible shock value – skim over a jump and you're often faced by a terrifying leap of faith...

OVER TO YOU!

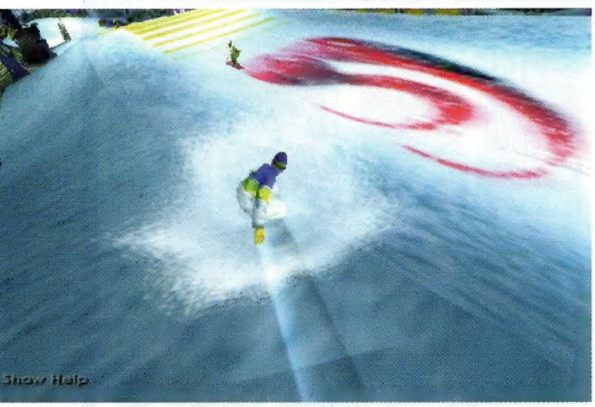
SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH PSM2

We'd like to hear what your PS2 Defining Moment is. Whether you've been lucky enough to get a Japanese system on import or you're waiting for the UK launch.

YOUR DEFINING MOMENT NEEDS TO:

■ Capture that 'PS2 feeling' ■ Be reasonably easy to illustrate

E-mail your Defining Moment to PSM2@FUTURENET.CO.UK, or write to Defining Moment, PSM2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Don't forget to attach a photograph of yourself...



SLEIGH THAT AGAIN: The replay feature lets you edit and save your most impressive run.

DON'T MISS

MORE UMISSABLE SSX ACTION

MASSIVE REVIEW pg16

The definitive judgement that covers every angle. Plus, behind-the-scenes info from the development team themselves...

LAUNCH GAMES FEATURE pg70

Your essential guide to the 28 other launch games.

LETTERS

THE LOUDEST VOICES IN THE PLAYSTATION 2 UNIVERSE

NEW!
NEW MACHINE! NEW MAG!
PSM2
PLAYING PLAYSTATION 2
PS2
ONLY IN PSM2
53 pages crammed with the best nice PlayStation 2 games
27 seriously stunning new shots of Timesplitters – rush to pg 96
METAL GEAR SOLID 2
Awesome new shots!
RIDGE RACER 5
Namco's beauty kicks off our scorching 12-page PS2 speed special
ISS vs FIFA
There can only be one winner. PSM2 decides who inside...
NEW FOR PS2
SILENT SCOPE ONIMUSHA RED SUMMONER SSX
"SO EXPLOSIVE IT'LL FEEL LIKE A JOHN WOO MOVIE!"
How PS2 lets game creators take you further – pg68
FEATURING:
Gran Turismo 2000, Moto GP, WipEout Fusion, The Getaway and more...
TURN OVER
SEE THE BACK OF THE MAG FOR MORE PS2 GAMES!
FIRST! REVIEWS TIPS DVDS INTERVIEWS PSone PREVIEWS EVERYTHING!

PSM2#03: Weeding out the games that stink.

STAR LETTER

ANTI-SCEPTIC

Dear PSM2,

I was impressed with your first issue and found the 'What is PS2?' article intriguing. Especially your claim that the PlayStation 2 has no anti-aliasing capabilities. The PlayStation 2 does have anti-aliasing capabilities – the technical manuals delivered to the coders have an entire section devoted to anti-aliasing. The problem is that it is harder to use this function, unlike the Dreamcast, because of the complexity of the console. Hopefully it won't take developers like Namco long to figure out how to work the new machine and we'll be getting fantastically smooth, detailed games without jaggies.

Emiaj

Via e-mail

The man is right, but is merely quoting Tony Mott's column in a recent issue of OPSM in which Sony's Phil Harrison told him that it was possible; that it was in a technical manual; but admitted that it was hard to do. We prefer to believe our eyes rather than the words of Sony's boss man – it may be possible, but it's so tricky and saps so much power that no-one CAN do it. Even *MGS2* has jaggies and the only relatively jaggie free game, *Driving Emotion*, does so by blurring everything to buggery.

Certainly, in two years time we'll have smooth edges – like we got hi-res games on PSone and transparency effects in Saturn games eventually – but rather than being accomplished via Sony's ace machine these will be better attributed to the skill and ingenuity of the programmers.

So, does PS2 have anti-aliasing or not? We stick with our original shout – it does not. Ladies and gentlemen we rest our case.

This is your chance to air your views on the hot potato of the moment – we're mad keen to hear what you think about the PS2 launch line-up...

Write to:
Letters, PSM2, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW

COST AFFECTIVE

Dear PSM2,

Great magazine, it helps us PS2 freaks cope with the agonising wait for the launch, but in the meantime do you have any idea how much some of the accessories will cost for PS2?

Robert Carter

Via e-mail

Sony's peripheral price list can be found in Global (pg12).

RETROACTIVE?

Dear PSM2,

Is it true that my old PlayStation games, controllers and MultiTap will work with the new console? Also, will I be able to use the G-Con 45 for the appropriate new PS2 games?

I think your mag is amazing and I can't stop reading it!

James Hobson.

Via e-mail

Yep, PS2 will play, and improve, your PSone games. Unfortunately, your original MultiTap and G-Con will only work with PSone games – you'll need a MultiTap 2 for PS2 games. Your original controllers will work, but they'll not be able to take advantage of the pressure sensitive controls that the DualShock 2 uses.

COMFORT-BLANKET BOMBING

Dear PSM2,

I have heard reports that over 250 games could hit PS2 in less than a year. Is this true?

Chay Dugdell

Via e-mail

You're not too far off. There're 29 launch titles, with upwards of 200 games in varying stages of development. Whether most of them are essential buys, of course, is another matter. That's what we do... sort the men from the boys...

WRITE TO PSM2 WITH: YOUR PS2 HOPES AND FEARS... YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE ISSUE... INTELLIGENT QUESTIONS...

ER, DID WE SAY 'BOYS'...

Dear PSM2,

Great mag, but just one tiny little complaint – the distinct lack of non-virtual girls. Being a hardcore girl gamer myself I was a little disappointed with your "cream of videogame journalism talent" all being men. If there's a shortage of ready and willing girl gamers then I'm more than happy to step in and help out. Looking forward to your next issue... girls or not.

Sam

Via e-mail

Disappointed? That's bloody charming, that is. Anyway, if you check the Review intro page (pg80) you'll find an invitation for everyone to share their views, news and reviews with all. It's a bit like Communism... only with less potatoes and tractors. So why not get involved, Sam?

VACUUM CLEANERS

Dear PSM2,

What can I say? I think "thanks" is about it. I've been a gamer all my life, starting with the release of the first ATARI system, progressing through the Spectrum and the Commodore Vic 20, to the great PSone. Now times are changing, it's great to find a magazine that is there for real gamers involved in the next generation machines.

After making one of the hardest decisions of my life – and at my age I've made a few of them – to sell my PSone, it's great to have something to take my mind of the fact that I have no PlayStation at the moment. Thanks for filling in my time with such a high-class magazine.

Dragon

Via e-mail

Pleasure Mr... er, Dragon.

WALK ON BUY

Dear PSM2,

Very cool magazine, it makes a hell of a change from that patronising stuff you get from every other magazine

EVERYBODY Hz

Dear PSM2,

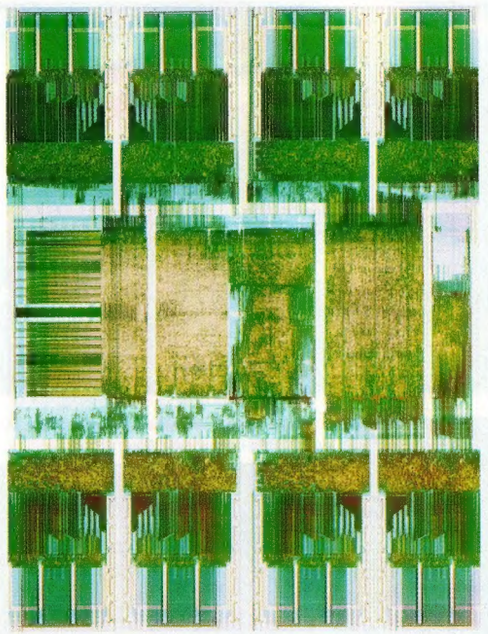
Everybody seems to be ranting and raving about how good the games are in their Japanese NTSC format, but what about us in Britain? Up until the Sega Dreamcast arrived with its 60Hz option, we had to put up with slower games with borders. Take Namco's PAL conversion of *Tekken 3*, which was, as I think you'll agree, absolutely awful compared to the NTSC version. Will the PAL version of PS2 be able to support a 50/60Hz option, as I feel this could be a major factor in the success of the machine in this country?

I can appreciate that the quality of a game and software support is all important to the success of Sony's new console, but surely with today's technology this feature is very possible. If Sega can do it with their hardware then surely Sony could follow suit. I've asked my local console shop and they seem to have no idea whether or not the PAL machine will be able to run at 60Hz full screen at full speed.

Tim Rowe

Via e-mail

The UK PAL PlayStation 2 will not have a 50/60Hz option. This means that, just as with PSone, code will have to be converted to the UK PAL 50Hz format before it will be released in the UK. The good news is that by now software companies are so used to the UK public griping about low speed, small-screen action that PAL conversions have never looked better. We've played finished code of the PAL *Tekken Tag Tournament*, and there is a small, but noticeable, difference, but we're confident that while the screen will update at a marginally reduced rate – 50 times a second rather than 60 – they'll be full-screen and will run at comparable speed to the Japanese originals. We'll keep you posted.



GRAPHICS SYNTHESISER: Somebody should print this on a rug, in a kind of knowing, groovy post-modern way.

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2

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Bath London Milan Munich New York Paris Rotterdam San Francisco Wroclaw

which treats you like a 5-year-old, the video was a nice touch and a bargain on a £2.99 magazine.

Incidentally, how long will it be before the price of PS2 drops and you will be able to just walk into a shop and buy one?

Matt
Via e-mail

Tricky. This is a question of supply and demand, and one that only Sony can answer. Flip the page for a report on the fallout from the pre-order system, and where we go from here.

SHIFTY DISC-O

Dear PSM2,
When it comes to playing DVDs on my newly ordered PS2, will there be a problem playing a disc's extras? I've heard that some makes of DVD players were unable to play the *Jaws* DVD intro.

Kate
Via e-mail

We've had no problems with our import model, and we believe that Sony have invested heavily in LSI Logic chips which'll improve the spec of the UK PS2's DVD functions. Maybe they care after all.

FUTURE IMPERFECT

Dear PSM2,
I'm sure that there are a large number of people who are as puzzled as I am by the difficulties in producing games for PlayStation 2. In your magazine (PSM2#01, pg126) Lorne Lanning – creator of *Oddworld* – expressed his frustrations about the hardware's design.

Would it be possible to compare the way 'conventional' systems on PSone are processed in regards to the 'new' system of PS2?

Rav
Via e-mail

All current PS2 development is still in a stage of relative infancy. As developers learn and progress – and take advantage of the available support from Sony (see PSM2#02 pg68) – Abe's Dad will find himself on the same learning curve on PS2 as PSone developers discovered five years ago. As for comparisons, you only have to read our regular interviews with the men on the frontline of development to see how far the process has come and where it's likely to be heading. Go, hear the man behind *SSX* speak on pg24...

MUSIC MAKES THE BOURGEOISIE

Dear
I ur[illegible]oy Digital compa[illegible] PS2 games feature [illegible]urround sound, or only [illegible]se that have been programmed with the code? I have a Dolby Digital decoder and just can't wait to hear the fantastic sound coming from *Metal Gear Solid 2*. Absolutely amazing!

I had to watch the video over and over to appreciate it more. I was emotionally overcome at what I was witnessing and hearing – especially with that superb musical score in the background. Please tell me that the music was not just for promo purposes and will actually feature as you play – and I don't mean like *Tomb Raider* where there is no music for long periods and then only a short burst of atmospheric music. I don't want to hear silence with the odd sound effects here and there as I play. I want to hear THAT MUSIC constantly – to enhance the playing experience/atmosphere. This just goes to show how important music is to a game. Well done Konami!

Angelo Carbone
Via e-mail

None of the current crop of Japanese titles appear to offer Dolby Digital and only a few PSone games have a Dolby Pro-Logic soundtrack – the old analogue system. The new Dolby Digital system employed by DVD players – and on DVD movies – is superior but more complicated, giving a stereo, full-range rear channel. Perhaps recognising that the number of Dolby Digital amp equipped punters is a handful at present, none of the current developers have bothered to program in a Dolby Digital rear channel/centre channel/sub-woofer soundtrack. The capability is certainly there but the time-versus-effort equation means that they can't be arsed.

Currently in development, Square's *The Bouncer* looks like it could be alone in taking advantage of Dolby Digital (see pg30). It took three years for the first Dolby Pro-Logic games to appear on PSone, so as Dolby Digital hardware seeps into homes PS2 developers will start catering for it.

TRAY CHIC: Sony are aiming to establish PS2 as a serious DVD player.

DON'T WRITE TO PSM2 WITH: MY CONSOLE'S BETTER THAN YOUR CONSOLE ARGUMENTS... PLEASE D-O-N'-T!

SCART FOR LIFE

Dear PSM2,
I'm looking forward to setting up my new PS2 under the TV but I can't work out the best way to do it. Obviously, I want it 'SCARTed up' but I already have my satellite & video plugged into the AV1 socket, and ideally I don't want to keep going behind the TV (or have wires hanging down the front) every time I want to use my PS2 to play or watch a DVD. I've tried the PlayStation scart lead in the AV2 socket but the picture is all blurred.

Chris
Via e-mail

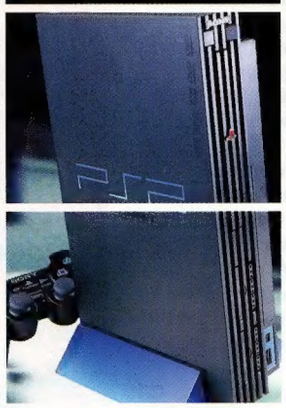
All you have to do Chris, is switch your inputs. On Sony TVs the AV1 socket is a dedicated RGB socket – this means it will support both NTSC and PAL PlayStation 2 and PSone, in beautifully sharp technicolour. The AV2 socket is designed for use with VCRs and analogue signals - and even though a PAL PS2 *will* work through AV2 – NTSC machines won't. Sony recommend using the AV1 SCART for *all* PlayStations, regardless of whether they're PAL or NTSC. PSM2

Pond-er Life: As Abe learns, Abe will grow – and all Lorne Lanning's fears will evaporate.

All correspondence is assumed to be for publication unless marked otherwise. PSM2 reserve the right to edit readers' letters for length and clarity.

PS2 PRE-ORDERING

THE FACTS, FUTURE TRUTHS AND OFFICIAL WORD FROM SONY...



"THE TRUTH IS THAT PRE-ORDERING DOESN'T ACTUALLY GUARANTEE YOU A PS2 ON NOVEMBER 24TH"

STORY SO FAR

THE LOW-DOWN ON PS2 PRE-ORDERING

After the free-for-all of the PSone launch Sony chose to introduce a pre-ordering scheme for PS2. Sony printed 200,000 forms that were available at retailers from September 7th. The idea was that if you filled in a form and paid a deposit to the retailer of your choice, you would be registered with Sony who'd inform you when you could expect to pick up a PS2 from that store. There are still a number of bundles around, with Dixons offering PS2, a DVD movie and two games for £399 and MVC promising £299 for a PS2 and £50 worth of money-off vouchers.

BUT CAN I STILL GET A PS2?

If you haven't pre-ordered a PS2 yet is there still any hope of getting one before Christmas?

Numbers. That's what it comes down to. The latest from Sony is that they are still expecting 'in the region of' 200,000 PS2s to arrive in the UK before Christmas. So, if you can find one of the very few pre-order forms left in some backwoods shop, then that'll guarantee you a PS2 in your stocking, right? Well, maybe...

The trouble is that this 200,000 figure is still a shaky one. Even Sony can't be absolutely sure this is the exact figure they'll receive due to the massive worldwide demand for the machine. If less do arrive (which everyone is hoping won't be the case) then your road trip to track down the holy pre-order form in some godforsaken corner of these Isles may be in vain. In this eventuality the system will revert to a first-come, first-served basis, so the first 190,000 who pre-ordered might be blissfully happy while 10,000 suffer the trauma of a PS2-less Yule.

A SILVER LINING?

If you do manage to get one of the 200,000 forms then Sony tell us you definitely will get one of the first 200,000 PS2s to enter the UK, even if this means you have to wait until the New Year. A Sony spokesman commented that your pre-ordered PS2 will wing its way to you "as soon as we can physically get you one."

Of course, although it's a faint one, there's always the possibility that the UK will receive more than 200,000 PS2s before Christmas, with an absolute top figure put at around 280,000 by industry insiders. As Sony haven't decided whether to extend the pre-order scheme, it's unclear exactly what would happen should this happy (but unlikely) eventuality occur.

To try to make things as crystal as they can be at this stage, we fielded some questions from a number of concerned PSM2 readers. *Daniel Gallagher* from Halifax wanted to know whether "having an order form will definitely get me a PlayStation 2 on launch day", while *Paul Nicholls* from Essex says "I rang my retailer to confirm my pre-order only to discover that now it may arrive any time between November 24th and December 31st, can this be true? Are Sony going to muck us around again?" The truth is that pre-ordering doesn't actually guarantee you a PS2 on November 24th. While Sony are "hopeful" of delivering all the promised machines before December 25th they can't say for definite that this will happen. Sony do say that they will keep everyone who has pre-ordered informed about when their PS2 is likely to arrive.

CHRISTMAS STARS

A surprising number of you seem happy to wait. The *Alcorn Family* asked "Can you pre-order your PS2 for Christmas rather than November 24th?" while *Angus Leggate* wondered "I have a deposit down on the PS2 and would like to know whether you think I should wait until Christmas to buy it." As far as we are aware there's no way of ordering for a specific date (as you might have gathered from the details above), so we suggest hiding it in a cupboard with all your other gifts. Waiting to buy your PS2 after Christmas shows tremendous will-power but isn't advisable. So far, all you've paid is a deposit – it's very likely that you will need to collect your PS2 and pay the balance within a set period of time or lose your place in the queue. Ouch.

"SONY WILL KEEP EVERYONE WHO PRE-ORDERED INFORMED ABOUT WHEN THEIR PS2 IS LIKELY TO ARRIVE"

BLACK CLOUDS

If you think we've got it bad, spare a thought for American consumers. In a vastly bigger market they've only been allocated 500,000 (see pg12). That's half the PS2s that they were expecting. Due to having a different power supply unit, Europe's quota is much less likely to be affected by Japanese demand. Rest assured, we'll be keeping you fully informed. **PSM2**

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2

GLOBAL

THE WIDE WIDE WORLD OF PLAYSTATION 2

スカラシサ

HOT PS2 FRACTION: Shortages are hitting the States as hard as they are Europe.

›LAUNCH NEWS モバイル

USA LAUNCH LINE-UP

Our transatlantic chums are getting 26 games on October 26th, three less than are currently slated for Britain.

Armored Core 2	Agetec
DOA2: Hardcore	Tecmo
Dynasty Warriors 2	Koei
ESPN X-Games Snowboarding	Konami
Eternal Ring	Agetec
Evergrace	Agetec
Fantavision	SCEI
Gun Griffon Blaze	Working Designs
Kessen	EA
Madden NFL 2001	EA
Midnight Club	Rockstar
Moto GP	Namco
Orphen	Activision
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2	Midway
Ridge Racer 5	Namco
Silent Scope	Konami
Smuggler's Run	Rockstar
SSX	EA
Street Fighter EX3	Capcom
Summoner	THQ
Swing Away Golf	EA
Tekken Tag Tournament	Namco
TimeSplitters	Eidos
Unreal Tournament	Infogrames
Wild Wild Racing	Interplay
X-Squad	EA

›LAUNCH LATEST フハワヌキニラ

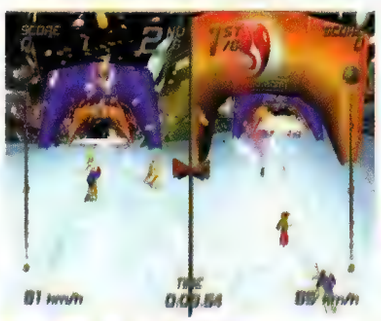
PS2 DROUGHT HITS USA

America will have to launch with the same number of units as Europe after all. Good.

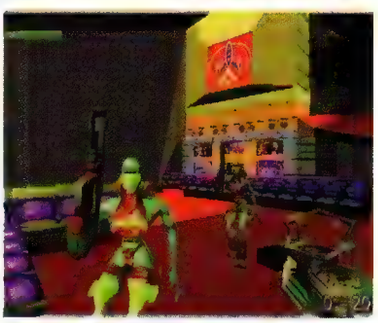
Sony have halved the number of units being shipped to the USA for launch. Rather than the expected one million, American gamers will have to make do with a mere 500,000 units, the same allocation set for Europe. Sony have cited a component shortage as the reason, although this comes as something of a shock after Sony's earlier announcement that they were stepping up production to 1.4 million units a month. They've promised that they'll still be delivering 100,000 PS2s a month to the USA following the initial launch.

Europe will have to split its half-million PS2s between 17 territories – there's still no confirmation of how many consoles the UK gets for day one (see pg 11 for more info).

PSM2 RECKONS Sony's [illegible] of shipping America [illegible] Europe [illegible]

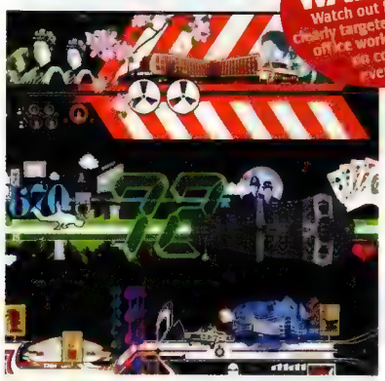


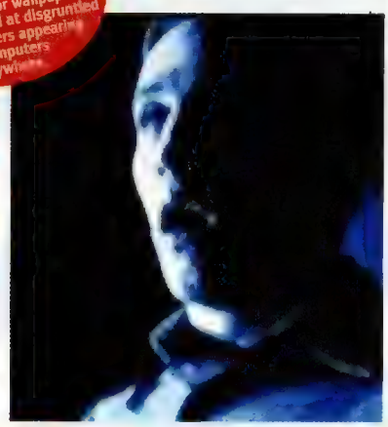
TIME FOR SPLIT SCREENERS: PSM2's game of the month, *SSX*, tops American gamers' most wanted lists...



SCREEN FOR TIMESPLITTERS: ... as does Eidos' liquid-smooth comic book shooter.

GLOBAL
WARNING!
Watch out for wallpaper clearly targeted at disgruntled office workers appearing on computers everywhere





AD MAX: It's a full-frontal assault from Sony, whose visually arresting imagery will be inescapable until launch.

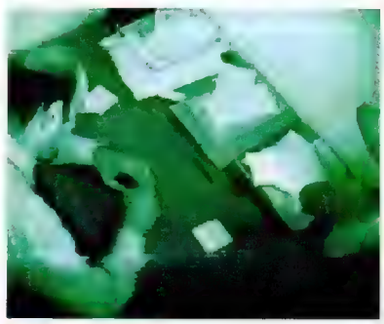
>MEDIA NEWS メハワヌ

PS2 ADS

Sony are cranking up their ad machine, and they're already making our brains hurt.

In the UK, Sony continue to court the arty crowd with PS2 ads that are highbrow to the point of being incomprehensible, while the US market gets a movie trailer full of fast cars, big explosions and some slack-jawed bloke going "Whoahh". Apart from those blue-dotted old people, Sony have released some nonsensical stuff involving blue-silhouetted molecules and fighter jets, and a fantastic video, which you can read more about below...

PSM2 RECKONS *We're [illegible] to rival the [illegible]*



CLOSE CIRCUITS: Sony's Waiting Room CD-ROM has left many bewildered (you may have seen the magazine ads).

RUMOURS

NEWS FROM THE PS2 UNDERGROUND

Sony aren't stupid, and we couldn't help wondering why they'd announce plans to provide one million units for the USA's launch if component shortages were likely. Then an insider at Sony piped up, suggesting that Sony have already redesigned the circuit board for the latest PS2 units in production to protect them from being mod-chipped, at the same time preventing them from playing multi-format DVDs. This explanation would make sense – the DVD region issue is a concern for Sony, and some mod-chip developers claim to have already mapped out the PS2's architecture.

RELIABILITY 4/10

PSM2 RECKONS *We're not sure if it's true, but it's certainly a lot more convincing than the other 'informed' opinions we've heard, which blame poor pre-orders and a lack of interest in the console. Content Security System guidelines are already supposed to stop importers from buying foreign DVDs over the counter, but they're impossible to enforce, which is why Sony have resorted to their own methods. They can't hope to stay ahead of mod-chippers for ever, but they could well be trying to get a head start and avoid having their launch hi-jacked by the ever-resourceful pirate crews.*

Those movie adaptations just keep coming. Paul Anderson is currently set to direct the *Resident Evil* movie adaptation, while The Legend of Tekken has started shooting with Yuen Biao and Cecilia Yip slated for the key roles of Kazuya and Jun. Anderson's qualifications for this sort of thing are reasonable – he's experienced in videogame adaptations (Mortal Kombat) and, um, mindless shooting (Kurt Russell's Soldier). Biao, on the other hand, will be familiar to Jackie Chan fans from classics like Dragons Forever and Wheels On Meals.

RELIABILITY 7/10

PSM2 RECKONS *Biao just doesn't have the screen presence of, say, Jet Li, and he's a bit too fresh-faced to play one of the ruthless Mishimas, but in martial arts terms he's easily the equal of his mates Jackie and Sammo. As for Resi, well, Mortal Kombat wasn't that bad, was it? Oh, all right.*

Rumours floating around the Net suggest that Electronic Arts are working on a freestyle BMX game. With Acclaim, Activision, and THQ releasing their own titles it's an already crowded market – with X-treme titles and hip, urban themed games becoming increasingly popular – and there's no word on the developers, but EA have apparently been signing up some very respected riders, including Taj Mihelich and Joe Rich of Terrible One.

RELIABILITY 9/10

PSM2 RECKONS *EA have mentioned on several occasions that they're set to expand their X-treme sports line-up, and a BMX game is a logical step. With* Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX *looking good already, their best bet's probably injecting some spectacularly impossible stunts, à la SSX.*

Parappa the Rapper should be coming to Japanese TV next year. The rights to all manner of cartoon psychedelia, talking dogs and men with onions for heads have been bought by Fuji TV. Good game-based cartoons are, of course, pretty thin on the ground – the only decent one we can think of was Earthworm Jim, and that was a bit over-reliant on the appeal of seeing people being flattened by falling cows.

RELIABILITY 9/10

PSM2 RECKONS *While the game became something of a cult hit due to its crazy visuals, it shouldn't have any difficulty fitting in with the majority of Saturday morning kiddie fare. Still, we'd rather see a Tae-Bo style aerobics programme for overweight housewives. Kick! Punch! It's all in the mind!*

It's happening again. During a demonstration of Sony's GSCube, which included real-time generation of Final Fantasy movie footage, PlayStation guru Ken Kuturagi got all excitable and started dropping hints about PlayStation 3. At the moment, Sony's plan is to release a chip-set with 100 times the power of PS2 by 2002, although this will only be available to content-developers. The PS3's future is more hazy, but it will be based around chips known as the Emotion Engine 3 and Graphics Synthesiser 3, and promises to present graphics indistinguishable from films. Don't expect this for five years or more, though.

RELIABILITY 7/10

PSM2 RECKONS *This stops now. Rest assured, we'll keep you up to date with any genuine developments on the PS3 front, but we won't be giving houseroom to frantic speculation. Anybody writing to us about what games will be coming out for the PS3 can expect swift, brutal retaliation.*

>MEDIA NEWS シフヨカノ

PSM2 CHATS ABOUT MAKING HISTORY

Sony's best publicity effort to date is a video entitled 'History' (pictured top of page), although they've yet to confirm where you'll be able to see it first.

Made by Midlands-based Jonnie Hardstaff, with visual effects by Shellie Carroll, it's an eclectic trip through gaming history. We were intrigued, so we asked Jonnie to explain.

- **On the idea behind the video** – "The premise was to convey the cultural impact of videogaming on people of our generation. A lot of people used to play videogames in their bedrooms, and it's partly designed to convey the idea that it could have been made in someone's bedroom – because there's still a lot of talent out there, and that's where it is."
- **On Sony's involvement** – "They basically gave me free reign."
- **On what Sony have done for videogaming** – "They've broken that spectacled, box-of-Kleenex image that it used to have... and that can only be a good thing."
- **On his gaming background** – "I liked *WipEout*, obviously, because it tied in with that clubbing lifestyle. And there's a game called *Pepper 2* on the CBS Kaleco which I still play now."

Jonnie continues to work for Ridley Scott Associates, and is in the planning stages of another project for Sony. This one will head into the future of gaming, which he promises will be 'hardcore in comparison to History.'

"IT'S A BIT OF A LOVED-UP HIPPY TUNE, BUT IT GIVES YOU THAT FEELING OF JUST WANTING TO THROW ALL YOUR CLOTHES OFF, WHICH WE ALL DO, DON'T WE? NOW AND AGAIN"

JONNIE HARDSTAFF Talking about the soundtrack to his 'History' video, Minnie Ripperton's *Les Fleurs*

"SONY SHOT FOR THE STARS AND DELIVERED A REALLY SWEET PIECE OF KIT. THEY EVEN DESIGNED IT CLEVERLY SO THAT IF YOU BUY TWO THEY MAKE PERFECT BOOKENDS"

DAVE PERRY SHINY ENTERTAINMENT

The maverick genius behind *Messiah* and *Sacrifice*, remaining surprisingly reticent on his PS2 plans, but showing his admiration for Sony.

›PERIPHERAL NEWS シフカノ

PS2 KIT

Sony have released their list of recommended retail prices for PS2 peripherals, to the accompaniment of a chorus of gagging noises from the PSM2 staff. Sony stress that they don't set individual retail prices, but blimey, their expected ones are a bit steep.

Here they are in full:

Horizontal Stand	£9.99
Vertical Stand	£9.95
Euro AV Cable	£34.99
AV Adaptor	£14.99
AV Cable	£12.99
SCART Video Cable	£19.99
RFU	£14.99
Memory Card (8meg)	£27.49
DualShock 2	£19.99
MultiTap 2	£29.99

To be fair, the Memory Card stores a fair amount of stuff, the PS2's chunky enough to stand up without the vertical support and the horizontal stand, frankly, is a needless luxury. But considering that *TimeSplitters* could be a key launch game, not bundling a MultiTap 2 with the machine is questionable, and pricing it at 30 quid's bordering on the ridiculous

PSM2 RECKONS *The prices will fall eventually, and competition from third-party developers should help, but this is the first time we've been unhappy with Sony in ages*

CARD SHARP: It's a massive step up from PSone's single meg capacity, but the price *is* steep and the old cards won't work on PS2.

HAIR APPARENT: Big-haired Angelina gets to spare some quality time with her pop on the *Tomb Raider* set.

Kobal Collection/Citadel Ent.

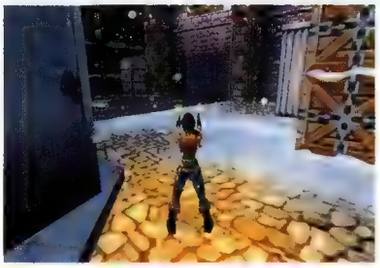
›LA MOVIE REPORT フハワヌ

LARA MOVIE LATEST

Lara's Dad gets played by Lara's Dad, and an All Saint could be out-acted by her eight-year-old...

While the world eagerly awaits the next grainy snap of Angelina Jolie in hotpants, details on the Tomb Raider movie continue to filter through. The cast now includes rubber-faced Red Dwarfer Chris Barrie as Lara's Butler, while Lord Croft will be played by Jolie's real-life parent and grizzled acting veteran Jon Voight. Also confirmed is main villain Iain Glen, most recently applauded for his turn opposite a kit-shedding Nicole Kidman in The Blue Room, while Natalie Appleton's daughter is rumoured to be playing a young Lara.

PSM2 RECKONS



GUN-HO: Twin pistol action, striking sets and massive, show-stopping set pieces are all you need...

RUBBERLY JUBBERLY: ... apart from some all-in-one fetish catsuits, of course. Certain to be in the movie, no?

›UK PS2 EVENT シフカノ

EVERYBODY DANCE NOW

PS2 continues to stay at the cutting edge of cool – albeit this time, '80s cool. Sony recently hosted the UK B-Boy Championships at London's Brixton Academy. Hip Hop legend Crazy Legs hosted the event, founder of modern deejaying Kool Herc performed alongside Roots Manuva, and Hungary's Suicidal Lifestyle beat defending Canadian champs Bag of Trix to claim the Crew Battling title.

PSM2 RECKONS *PSM2 went, and we've been polishing up our lino ever since. The moves on show, frankly, put Eddy Gordo to shame. Why isn't the Bust-A-Groove series this good?*

TILTING AT WINDMILLS: You can't diss people in *Dance Dance Revolution*, either. Why not?

SPIN DIZZY: The event marked the first public demo of PlayStation 2 in the UK. The crowds went mad...

"IT'S SO FAR AHEAD OF EVERYTHING OUT TODAY THAT IT MOVES THE FRONTLINE AGAIN – LIKE THE FIRST PS DID FOR THE MEGA DRIVE AND SNES BY INTRODUCING THE 3D REALM"

FREDRIK LIKLIEGREN DIGITAL ILLUSIONS

Mildly impressed by PS2's superiority over all other current platforms. He also reckons that, from what he was shown, it will be 'the one format for the next few years'. All the top developers are getting extremely excited, so the dodgy ones had better head for the hills.

BYTESIZE

› The Lynx Barbershop on London's Oxford Street is offering its customers a go on PlayStation 2 while they wait for a trim. They reckon they'll have machines before the official UK launch date.

› **Taito have announced that they'll be releasing a speech recognition controller for PS2. They'll also release two games for it, based around – ready? – mah-jongg and football. Saints preserve us.**

› Konami may have dominated the games arena, but Namco walked away from the Tokyo Games Show triumphant, scooping the prestigious 'Sexiest Booth Companion' award for the scantily-clad *Ridge* girls adorning their stall.

› **Sony have announced that they plan to deliver a new GSCube called GSCube 64 with the power of 64 PS2 Graphic Synthesiser chips, or four times the amount on the existing GSCube design.**

› The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected Sony's copyright claims against Connectix, the publisher of the Virtual Game Station, a PlayStation emulator for the Mac and PC. Connectix maintained that they reverse-engineered the hardware.

› **More games have been announced for Sony's Popegg printer, including *Lake Master EX* and, er... *Eyebrow Mume*. The Cybershot camera will be supported by *Golf Paradise*, *Tipped Marker*, and *True Love Story*.**

› Electronic Arts have licensed LIPSinc's Echo to be used in the production of four new PS2 games. LIPSinc is reportedly the most realistic facial animation programme yet, automating a process which is normally done by hand. **PSM2**

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

See the Legends of Fierce Warriors come alive!

Plunge directly into battle as one of 9 historically inspired, devastatingly fierce warriors as you battle on foot and horseback. Join the ranks of heroes of old as you fight your way through hundreds of merciless warriors in your quest for the greatest prize of all - China!

"Easily one of the most technically impressive action games ever." -PSM

- Witness extraordinary graphics on battlefields of truly epic proportions!
- Over 1000 combatants per stage, with more than 30 on-screen at any given time!
- Choose one of 9 heroes to lead your armies into battle.

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KOEI

PlayStation 2

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COVER GAME

PSM2 TAKES APART A PREMIER PLAYSTATION 2 TITLE FOR YOUR EXCLUSIVE PLEASURE...

OUT UK LAUNCH

SSX

ADRENALINE. TENSION. BITING COLD. THAT'S WHY *YOU'LL* BE BUYING A PLAYSTATION 2

Think *Tony Hawk's*. Think *WipEout*. Think 100mph at 8,000 feet. *SSX* feels so good, you'll want to lick the shiny black casing of your PS2.

REVIEWER: Daniel Dawkins

The gorgeous squeak of fresh powder, the satisfaction of skimming your hand over fluffy snow and the elation of planting a *perfect* back flip. It's all here. But what if you could combine these feelings with the violent intensity of *Tekken* and white-knuckle racing thrills of *WipEout*? Hold that thought. It's the *SSX* emotion – and currently the best reason to buy a PS2.

You don't need to like snowboarding to love *SSX*. The wrestling fans on our team coo at its brilliance. The game draws you in with virgin-pure playability – think *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* in high-definition stereo. *SSX* strikes a gorgeous balance between racing, trickery and exploration. All three are needed to succeed at the highest level. Slope veterans will *adore* it, but there's just as much to enjoy for people who'd rather be grinding their rivals into the track walls in *TOCA World Touring Cars*.

The secret lies in the sense of immersion. *SSX* is stacked with details that slam you into the action. Riders punch the air when they land gnarly tricks and taunt their rivals as they overtake. The game's compulsive nature hits you quite literally between the eyes. The first time a rival slaps one on you, you'll recoil with disbelief. Your grip will choke the joypad when you eventually catch up with your assailant. You will get revenge, because *SSX* takes you high and hits you hard. And never lets up.

The graphics are equally astounding. The snow puffs like flour, the sun glares with almost tangible warmth and ice glints with steely menace. It's everything a PS2 game should be.

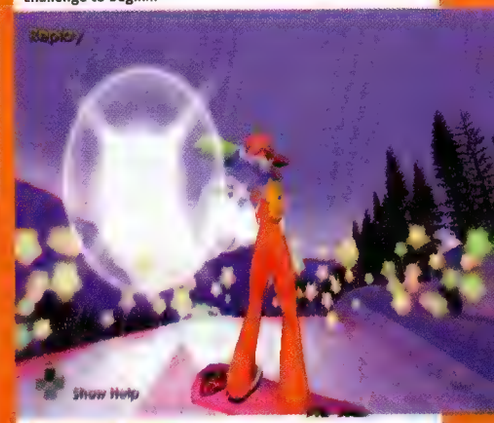
No other console could handle the sprawling horizons of *SSX*. You can see every jump, twist and obstacle from unnerving distance. It might be a result of cunning track design, but the game never blocks in with ugly scenery, shifting almost solidly at 60fps. At its best, it's eye wateringly good – like discovering Angelina Jolie at your front door with a Twister mat and a catering-sized jar of lemon curd.

HEADS UP: The camera is never a cause for complaint, despite the ambitious shot here. It always captures the action clearly.

CUSTOMISE BOARDER: Trade-in experience points to boost your rider's speed, cornering, trickery and stability. Why not get them a new board and matching outfit as well? Ooh, it's so twee.

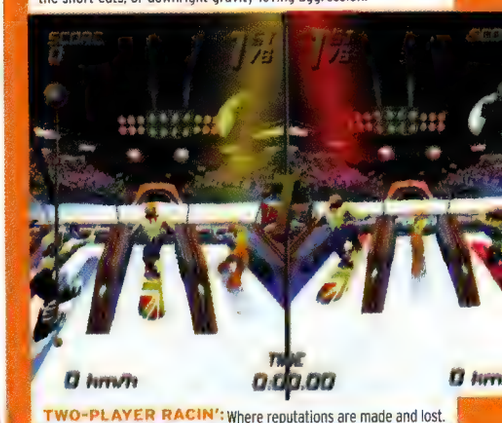
IF IT'S IN THE GAME

With so much to enjoy, you won't know where to start. We heartily recommend honing your skills in the Warm Up mode before entering the World Circuit races. Several blissful days later, you'll emerge a wily slope veteran, ready for the *real* challenge to begin...



SHOW OFF MODE: So you've unlocked all the tracks? Things are just getting started. Revisit your favourite levels in a trick-based run against the clock – win medals by hitting the ludicrous, but agonisingly possible, points targets.

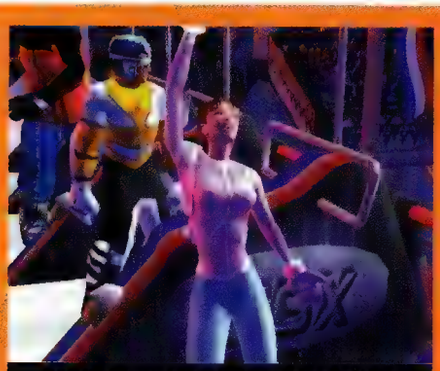
RACE MODE: Finish in the top three to unlock new levels and gain experience. Then go back and aim for golds. The secret lies in the short-cuts, or downright gravity-loving aggression.



TWO-PLAYER RACIN': Where reputations are made and lost.

COVER GAME

PSM2 TAKES APART A PREMIER PLAYSTATION 2 TITLE FOR YOUR EXCLUSIVE PLEASURE...



KAORI: The Japanese cutey is small enough to pull wild flips.

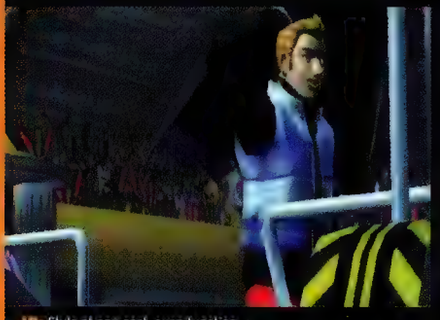
THE MILE HIGH CLUB

You start with four riders, Mac, Moby, Elise, Kaori. Unlock the full motley crew by earning experience points in the World Circuit races. Which one will be your favourite?

HIRO: A speedy slalom rider and dedicated slave to fashion.

JURGEN: The burly German – wider than Huggy Bear's flares.

MOBY: Dreadlocked Brit Moby looks and races like a beast.



JP: Style at any cost, even function.

►The music reflects the heart-thumping atmosphere. EA have used a real-time mixing system, which allows tracks to blend seamlessly together mid-race.

Brilliantly, the tempo rises according to your performance. As you scream past your rivals into first place, the booming voice of MC Rahzel declares "You're one step ahead of the game!" and a crushing new hip hop beat kicks in.

Conversely, the music fades into ominous silence when you catch major air. The shift of focus is subtle but devastating. Deprived of noise, you can almost taste the majesty of the open sky.

I BELIEVE I CAN FLY...

The gameplay premise is deceptively simple. It's based on Boardercross – where six boarders race simultaneously down an obstacle-packed mountain. To progress through the levels in *SSX*, you'll need to enter the World Circuit mode. Starting on the simple Snowdream course, consecutive top three finishes will advance you past the two qualifying rounds into the final. Get a medal here to unlock the next, more devious, course. Simple? Well not for long.

The game can be played as an out-and-out-racer, encouraging tight racing lines and minimal crashes. The physics model allows for bitingly realistic carved turns. Characters shift their body weight with charming accuracy. You bend down to pick up speed and, bingo, it starts to feel *right*. Right that is, until you launch into a double front flip off a pneumatic jump pad, landing among a shower of spotlights and fireworks.

SSX takes reality and forces it down the barrel of a gun. It makes all the right concessions between fantasy and reality – like The Simpsons. Homer could fall and break every bone in his body but he'd never suffer the next week. Similarly, the *SSX* riders might plummet headfirst onto the ice, crumple like rag dolls and roll for 100 metres, but they'll always be fine after a correctional flick of the joypad.

The level designs also radiate cartoon lunacy. If you raise an eyebrow at the►

INSIGHT

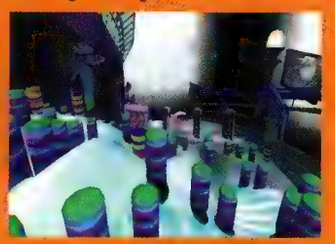
This is the first game of EA's planned Big series – a development arm dedicated to extreme sports. The company are unsure whether to continue with the tag after this. What do you think?

MAC: A feisty Canadian all-rounder, with a lot to prove.

ZOE: Sassy, streetwise Zoe. She could present videogame shows...

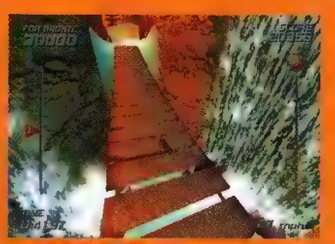
REALITY EXPLODES

Real physics. Fantasy action. *SSX* lures you into a believable world then hits you in the face with a five tonne luminous kipper. Watch on as reality waves the big white flag...



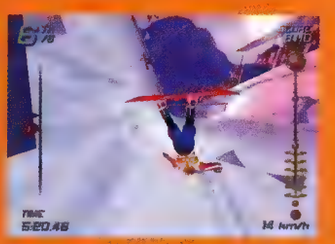
FROM PINE TO PINBALL

SAY WHAT? The rolling pinewood hills of the Elysium slopes look like an inviting holiday destination, the pinball table of the Tokyo Megaplex would also be a fine break - for plastic chewing loonies.



SAFETY FIRST

FOR MY NEXT TRICK: Like all sensible nursery slopes, small jumps are carefully flagged in the early levels. The safety inspector must have been feeling generous the day he inspected the Mesablanca bridge...

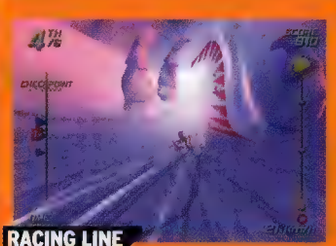


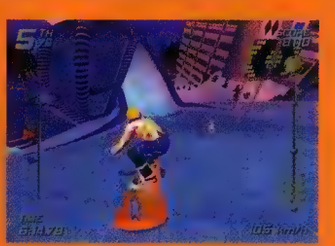
OOPS A DAISY

OOH, THAT'LL NEED STITCHES: Just as you'd expect, Kaori lays out her palms to cushion a squiffy turn before moving on. How does Moby plan to continue with multiple lacerations of the spine?

SUNNY SPELLS

WISH YOU WERE HERE: From gorgeous haze and golden rays peaking over the mountains to multiple flare and technicolour power-up sparkles. Tricks aren't the only extreme element of *SSX*.





RACING LINE

ROUND THE TWIST: As you become more confident on a board, it's simple enough to take a tight turn, but any sane boarder would think twice when faced with an icy loop of death.

TRICKS

JUMP AROUND: A simple board grab seems plausible enough, but the Jesus Christ Superstar antics on show when you get big air are, frankly, ridiculous. Look out for the Unethical Experimental.

ONLY ON PS2

Unimpressed by PS2? It's time to open your eyes...

FULL BEAM: Fixed light source environment mapping - see how the sun refracts through the trees, with context sensitive beam distribution and refraction.
LIVIN' DOLL: Realistic character dynamics and animation - Zoe twists, and falls, as you'd expect.
TIDE IS HIGH: Translucent water effects - watch out for the rippling surface.
LET US SPRAY: Particle effects - powder fine snow cannons and iridescent firework sparks.
ACCESSOR-EYES: Detailing - look at Zoe's hair and designer goggles.
PRAISE VIEW: Draw distances - how far can you see into the horizon? Look at those steely grandstands
BIG BREAKS: Real time audio mixing - bust a move, bring the groove.

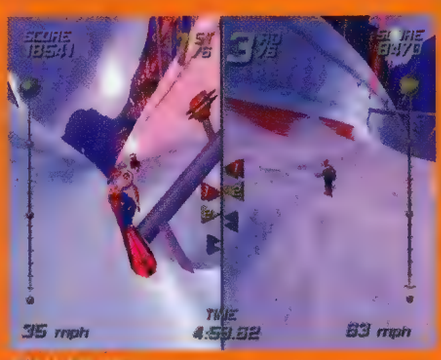
"SSX IS THE BEST LAUNCH TITLE FOR PS2 AND ARGUABLY AS GOOD AS ANY OTHER GAME EVER RELEASED ON A CONSOLE BEFORE IT"

David Zdyrko
Imagine Gaming Network, USA

TWO INFINITY...

Not only is *SSX* fast, it feels even *faster* in its two-player incarnation. You'll have to Sellotape your eyes open for the twisting tunnels of Mesablanca – one blink could cause a wipe out. The only compromise is the absence of the board trails – the horizons stretch forever. The gameplay balance is perfect. You can take the lead with a cunning shortcut, only to hit a tree stump and watch your rival scream by. Just make a mental note to ride over them when they gaff later on. For two equally skilled gamers, this is teeth-gnawing, pad-shaking rivalry at its best. You're only as good as your next mistake...

GLANCING BACK: Riders sneak a quick peek behind when passing a rival, but they don't keep their eyes off the track for long.



BEAM ME UP: A red beam indicates to Player Two that they're getting thrashed by Player One. Time to play catch-up.

BUMPER 2 BUMPER: Beat your rivals to the switches and activate the bumpers on the Tokyo Megaplex track.

COVER GAME

PSM2 TAKES APART A PREMIER PLAYSTATION 2 TITLE FOR YOUR EXCLUSIVE PLEASURE...

ROUTE MAP

Here's an example of the branching nature of the tracks, featuring Aloha Ice Jam. Start directly below...

TUNNEL OF LOVE

Fall slightly short, and you'll end up in a watery tunnel, with some gorgeous reflections on the ceiling and a trick boost at the end. Fail really short, and you'll smash into a sign.

START HERE

At the end of a perspex tunnel, a potential jump pops out in front of you. If you fancy your chances, slam on the boost and let go of the jump button as late as you dare...

DROPPING IN

Cop out of the high jump, and you'll have to negotiate another few tricky curves. Alternatively, just hit the boost and skim over the top of them.

SPARK UP

Get the trick boost in the tunnel, then pull a ludicrous stunt to pump up that adrenaline meter.

SPLISH SPLASH

Watch out for the water – you've got almost no traction, and it tends to lead to sudden drops.

FOR THE HIGH JUMP

Whichever way you go, veer right to get the speed up for the next bit.

IN THE MOUTH

If you're going fast enough, try for the big jump down the bizarre Hawaiian statue's throat.

SIGN OF THE TIMES

If you miss the mouth, you'll have some serious time to make up. Watch out for *SSX* signs, which usually lead to mini short-cuts.

NEW DIRECTIONS

Often, the choice you're presented with is quite subtle – speed or a trick opportunity, which allows you to build up your Boost energy.

BACK TO THE GRIND

Whatever you do, it's a straight rail slide to the last tunnel.

MILE HIGH CLUB

There are six raised sections spanning about a third of the course. Nail them all, and you'll win. Easily.

THE GRAND FINALE

"THERE ARE SO MANY PATHS DOWN EACH COURSE THAT THE REPLAY VALUE IS VIRTUALLY ENDLESS"

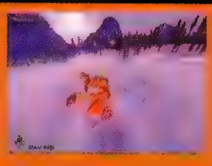
Larry LaPierre, the Development Director of *SSX*, divulged a wealth of short-cuts and bonuses to PSM2. To discover why you'll be playing *SSX* longer, harder and faster in pursuit of the *ultimate* hidden extra, just take a look above...

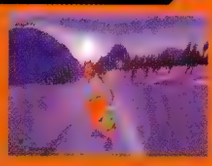
PISTE OFF

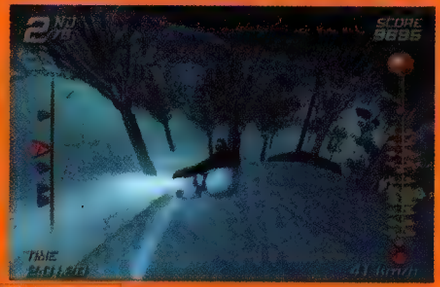
Broken nose? Aching legs? If you're sick of competition, you should slip off the course and seek some fresh uncut powder. Swish, swoosh...it's all very hypnotic – until you career off a blind cliff straight back into the action. Oh well.

CHRIST! Skimming off the lip of a challenging clump of powder, you find yourself returning to the icy cours below. Miles below.

JESUS! Yeah, so we're in last place... but at least you can spend time taking in the awe-inspiring track design...







OFFPOWDER! If you get really do get hopelessly lost, just press Select to return to the confines of the course.

▶monstrous ice loop of the Elysium alps, you'll suffer an electric facelift when you crash through the mineshaft on the Mesablanca course. After an Indiana Jones-style rail leap over a gaping chasm, you'll feel ready for anything. Until one level later, when you become the human ball on the pinball table of the Tokyo Megaplex. It's a compelling sensory crescendo.

SURE SHOT

The special diversions are far from superfluous – they'll boost your speed and act as short-cuts. For example, the air jets of the Tokyo course allow you extra time to perform tricks, which in turn can be used to boost your Adrenaline Bar and gain speed. The Adrenaline Bar rewards your successful flips, twists and grabs with nifty speed bursts – which are stored in an adrenaline reservoir until you tap the square button.

It introduces a devious tactical element to the racing action. The more dangerous tricks score greater adrenaline. Should you risk a dangerous backflip close to the finish line in order to boost into first place, or do you play it safe and settle for second? Decisions. Decisions.

THROUGH THE CEILING

The greatest part of *SSX* is that the game grows to match your skills. Most sportsmen, particularly those in extreme sports, know all about 'performance ceilings' – where you hit the barriers of your ability and can't seem to improve. You push and push, with little discernible result, until you finally smash to the other side. BANG. You start discovering loads of new tricks again. This happens in *SSX*, when you really max out the jump potential of the prewind control system. The game is waiting for you at the other side with a host of brand new short-cuts to test your mettle. You'll smash through about four such barriers in the trick-based Show Off mode.

Longevity worries are further eroded by the excellent two-player races. The split screen makes few compromises to detail and speed (the only feature you immediately notice is missing is the board trail in the snow), inducing intense rivalry. Invite your friends round for a night of hammy bravado and shattering humiliation. Competition in the PSM2 office is tense – we've already seen some shockingly cheesy use of the Pause button to scupper a rival's concentration. Cries of "Booya!", "Have some!" and "Pain ooon a stick!" abound – *SSX* certainly looks destined to become a two-player classic to rival *Tekken* or even (dare we say it?) the mighty *ISS*.

So it's perfect, right? You'd be forgiven for thinking so. When *SSX* is in full flight – delivering adrenalised

"LONGEVITY WORRIES ARE ERODED BY THE EXCELLENT TWO-PLAYER RACES. THE SPLIT SCREEN MAKES FEW COMPROMISES TO SPEED"

INSIGHT

Boardercross began in 1991. A hybrid of snowboarding and motorcross, six racers charge down a near vertical jump-packed course in a frantic attempt to finish first. Result: carnage.

LATE ZOOM! The start of a race is always accompanied by lots of shouting, twaggling of the right Analogue to slap your opponents, and a chase for the best racing line to make the most of the first cliff edge. It's certainly intense...

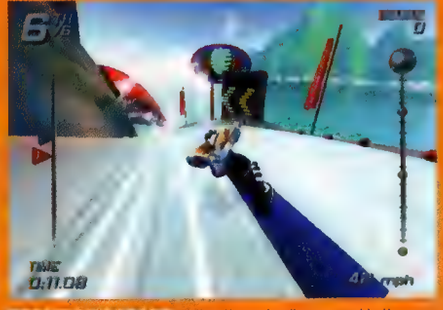
INCREASE THE SPEED

A few seconds can mark the difference between victory and abject failure. For every excruciating risk you take, there's usually a suitable reward – leaning forward on ice will rocket your speed, but cripple your traction. Surrounded by rivals at near uncontrollable speed, should you *really* be going for that speed-up icon? Alternatively, just find the right short-cut and wonder why you ever struggled. Eat my wake, suckers... aargh, TREE!

HELLY TUBE! Grind along one of these to get a boost in speed (and a slab of points, if you manage to land properly)

SUBWAY HOSE! The underground rails in Mesa – the blurring rock textures on the walls show how fast you're going.

IN THE BEACH! Powder slows you down (notice how the board has disappeared under all the fat snow). Avoid it if you need speed...



TRENCH WARFARE! Follow the racing lines carved in the snow by your competitors – you'll be up on them in no time.

LIGHTNING GUST! The speed up icon – slide through one of these to nab a temporary turbo.

I'M FEELING ZERO! These glass signs always signal short-cuts – shatter them to find the way...

HOME TO ROOST! See that streaking? That's the Matrix-style adrenaline boost – use it before a jump to grab some serious air.

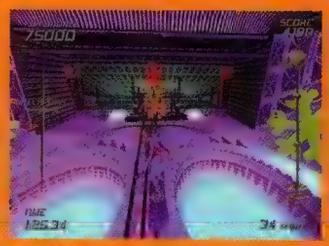
COVER GAME

PSM2 TAKES APART A PREMIER PLAYSTATION 2 TITLE FOR YOUR EXCLUSIVE PLEASURE...

POINTS WIN PRIZES

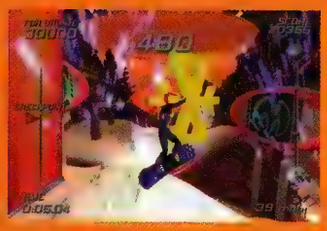
Show Off mode tests your skills to the limit. Racing against time, you've got to hit very exacting points targets to win a medal, busting out your greatest moves on the biggest jumps. Don't settle for a single back flip if a double is even remotely on. The levels are dotted with snowflake icons which multiply your trick score according to their colour. It's the only way you'll get those golds.

GRIND TRICK: Grinding on a rail, and grabbing a x3 multiplier means big show points.



MEDICAL: The three snowflake colours in close proximity - the yellows are easiest to pick up.

POINTS OF VIEW: The Pipedream course is packed with rails - there's even a full 360° loop, hiding a x5 multiplier. Huge points.



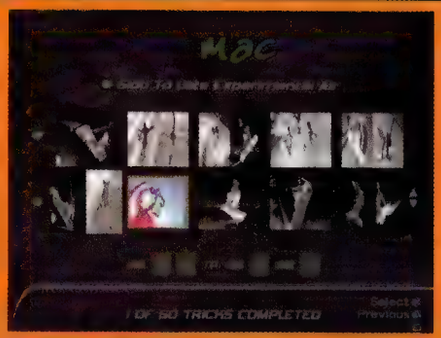
MEDICAL: Just look how hard it is to reach the biggest scoring stars. They're well worth it though.

"A COMPETITOR CAN'T BEAT YOU TO THE FINISH LINE IF THEY ARE PULLING THEMSELVES OUT OF A TANGLED FENCE"

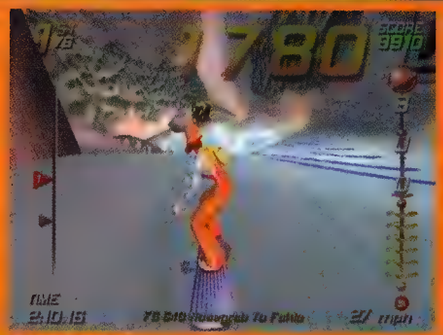
Larry LaPierre shares his aggressive views with PSM2. For more pearls of wisdom from the man behind *SSX*, turn to pg24...

IT'S TRICKY

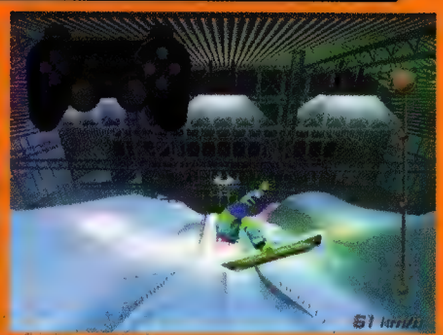
"Tailgraaab... that's the only trick you'll ever need!" screams MC Rahzel. The liar. Why not combine your tricks to produce a Rodeo 720 Nosegrab to Late Iffy Stiffy? Like the *Tony Hawk's* games, variety scores high, as does extremity and ingenious use of terrain. Moves are performed using a pre-wind system – the longer you hold jump and push the direction pad, the further and faster you spin. Press the shoulder buttons in tandem to unleash wild grabs. After a little practice, a 720 Ripe Swiss Cheese won't seem quite as unpalatable.



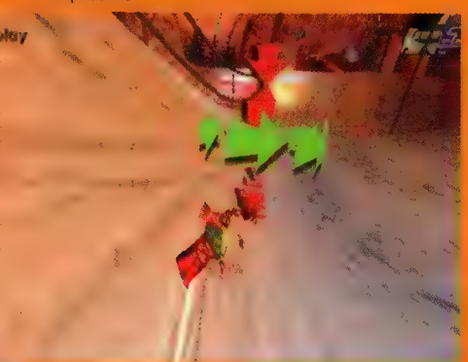
TRICKS OF MY TEARS: Access your character's full list of 50 individual tricks - a black and white image means you've yet to do it.



SCORE POINT: Each trick you pull off earns you points - the longer you hold the trick, the higher your score gets.



I'VE GOT GRADE: The more tricks you pull off, the more your adrenaline bar fills up, meaning you'll be able to turbo more often. Easy.



TRICKY KID: Skim through the trick boost icon and your rider gets faster, sparkling spins with their next trick...

FLIPPING HECK: If you don't land your trick successfully, you don't get the points, no matter how crowd-pleasing your spins are.

SNOW STOPPER: Pre-wind as much as you can before a jump - you'll grab more air and be able to combine more amazing tricks.

A MATTER OF COURSE

From Tokyo to Hawaii, there's always a wilder challenge ahead. Will *you* be able to jump the motorway in Mercury City?

SNOWDREAM
A floodlit, jump-packed beginner's course with plenty to grind on. Lots of obvious short-cuts too.

ELYSIUM
A pure racing course, caked in ice with vicious powder cliff drops. Watch out for the loop...

MERCURY CITY
A wild midnight city with so many hidden routes it'll take you ages to see everything.

MESABLANCA
A high speed swirl through twisting tunnels and mineshafts. The action happens during sunset here...

TOKYO MEGAPLEX
The infamous pinball track – colourful, exciting to ride and decidedly tricky.

ALOHA ICE JAM
A floating iceberg towed out into the pacific for racing. Like Tokyo, this is for the expert...

▶fun with relentless shocks – there's little to touch it. But step back when you're not playing the game and mini cracks do indeed start to appear. The very occasional slowdown *can* shatter the illusion of reality. The contrived three round racing structure does get tiresome. Why do the masked rival drones get inexplicably better between rounds? How annoying is it when your finger slips off the jump button and a pre-wound back flip becomes a hasty skid? You'll get at least one bum moment in your time with *SSX*.

Ultimately, any game that can make you shout "This is great!" five times in one race can't be bad. The physics are just *so* good, the feel *so* right, you'll surrender to your instincts. It's the kind of game that will pull in non-gamers as well the hardcore fan – they won't be able to describe why it feels so damn good, they'll just know it marks the start of something new.

SSX is seriously, *seriously* good. Relief will course through your veins every time your tail clips the edge of a monster ravine and you stay in a race. It's emotional. It's why you'll forget all that pre-order hell. The gorgeous graphics are a justification in themselves. While many PS2 games say *nearly* great, *SSX* says *really* great. And says it bloody, terrifyingly loud. The second generation has arrived. **PSM2**

SSX is a UK launch game. If the PAL conversion can maintain the speedy feel of its NTSC cousin, you'd be a nettle-sucking mentalist to miss it.

"ANY GAME THAT CAN MAKE YOU SHOUT "THIS IS GREAT!" FIVE TIMES IN ONE RACE CAN'T BE BAD"

INSIGHT

■ At the last US boarder-cross open, Frenchman Xavier Delerue smashed through the starting gates after confusing a helicopter for the starter's gun. They let

EXTREMIST'S CHOICE

1 **SSX**
A raw gameplay blast that will rally fans of *every* genre around PlayStation 2.

2 **TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2**
A great game made greater. Unrivalled scenic interaction with dated graphics.

3 **COOL BOARDERS 2**
The best snowboard action on PSone. Its slopes look strangely bare in comparison.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ The harder you squeeze the more the game provides
- The tricks seem a little daunting initially.

GRAPHICS
+ Pin sharp detail riotous effects This is what PS2 was made for
- Occasional slowdown It's marginal

SOUND
+ Crashing commentary and reactive real-time tunes
- You might not like heart stopping beats and a frenzied MC

LIFESPAN
+ When you improve, the game steps up a gear Secrets galore
- After a few months, you'll have found some of the short-cuts

OVERALL
***SSX* does for PS2 what *WipEout* did for PSone. And then some. While *everyone* will enjoy it, others will take to their hearts.**

94

PURE WHITE

DID IT ME? The detail is impressive - just look at Kaori's dog-faced backpack and the image on her board. And the burning flares. And...

AMAZING PACE! Two-player games offer so much opportunity for nip-and-tuck racing - find those short-cuts to guarantee a win.

"The game speaks for itself. It looks, feels and plays like a second generation title, but it's available at launch"

LARRY LAPIERRE

THE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR OF SSX

Talks to Daniel Dawkins

That man on the left has every reason to smile – that fringe is windproof. Then there's the small matter of his team's game being the stand-out launch title on PS2. It's all the more remarkable because a few short months ago *SSX* was looking like a very competent, but unremarkable, snowboarding simulation. When Larry told the office they'd need "pinball tables and unfeasibly large penguins", everyone thought he was discussing biscuits for the games room. How wrong could they be? So, PSM2 talked to one of the masterminds behind *SSX*, for a unique perspective on the game that *everyone* will be talking about...

WHAT WAS THE TEAM'S MAIN AIM WITH SSX?

The team first wanted to provide a fun arcade-style racing experience... it just so happens we chose snowboarding as the vehicle. Snowboarding had some decent success as a genre, but the key for *SSX* lay within opening up the appeal to a wider audience by putting greater emphasis on racing. As a vehicle, snowboarding has great feedback through snow spray, sliding boards and chattering ice surfaces. All the feedback is in the riders' animations, not to mention all the wild tricks and intense speed.

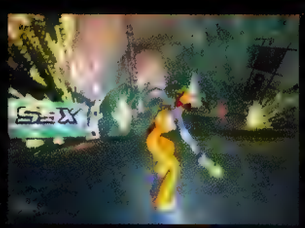
WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION BEHIND SOME OF THE WILDER TRACKS, LIKE TOKYO MEGAPLEX OR MERCURY CITY?

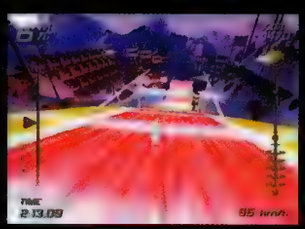
We were inspired to create levels that were like nothing anyone had experienced. We wanted them to be grounded in reality, but extrapolated for the fun of it. The only limitation we put on ourselves was that of plausible reality – with enough money and resources this world could really exist.

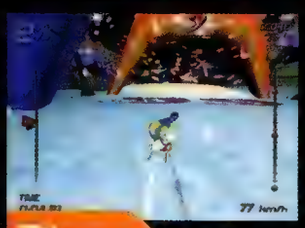
YOU'VE ASSEMBLED AN INTERESTING LINE-UP OF MUSICAL TALENT, INCLUDING MIX MASTER MIKE AND RAHZEL. ARE THESE GUYS HEROES OF THE TEAM?

The music was primarily driven by one of our associate producers and the audio team. We wanted an up-beat audio environment that was easily scalable for our mix-on-the-fly technology. Mike and Rahzel were a fantastic pair for this and were so into it. The team was very excited when they agreed to get together to do something for *SSX*.

THE CHARACTERS ARE CERTAINLY A DIVERSE LOT TO LOOK AT, BUT DO THEIR PERSONALITIES *REALLY* DISPLAY THEMSELVES ON-TRACK?







MEET THE MUSICAL DYNAMOS BEHIND SSX

MIX MASTER MIKE a member of the three-time World Scratch Champions, the Invisible Scratch Pickles and guest turntablist for the Beastie Boys. A DJ master.

RAHZEL the 'Godfather of Noyze' and human beatbox. Famous for his work with sound pioneers The Roots Crew. Now he's the distinctive voice of *SSX*.

Primarily the characters do quite a bit of trash-talking as they bump and shove... some more than others. They've aggressive attributes that get triggered as you interact with them, but some are more likely to respond to aggression than others.

WHAT GOODIES CAN PLAYERS EXPECT IF THEY WIN THE PRO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP INVITE EVENT?

We think we have a great payoff for beating the Championship invitation events – through the whole game we focus on hyping-out the environments... big productions, big crowds... the payoff is an evolution back to the soul of the sport with a huge freeride mountain and miles of powder and tree slaloms. We think *SSX* pays off big in this area.

HOW MANY TRICKS ARE AVAILABLE AND HOW DO THEY CONTRIBUTE TO THE RACING GAMEPLAY?

It's difficult to put a finite number on the tricks and combinations as it's completely dependant on how much air you get. Let's just say that each rider has a standard compliment of grabs all around their board, as well as some character specific grabs. All the spins and flips, and combinations there of, are completely dependant on the air time you manage to get. So let's say thousands.

WE'VE SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME PLAY-TESTING THE SHOW-OFF MODE – WHAT'S THE THINKING BEHIND IT?

Show-off is based on all the same tricks and rules available in the other modes, including the adrenaline bar. The only differences are that it's all about busting the biggest tricks within a specified time limit without any of the race power-ups for tricks and speed boosts.

WHY DIDN'T YOU MAKE MORE USE OF THE ANALOGUE BUTTONS ON THE DUALSHOCK 2?

We primarily focused on the Analogue joypads for turning/tucking and braking, and the right stick for shoving left and right. We didn't incorporate the Analogue buttons into the gameplay, but look forward to finding an intuitive benefit for our gameplay in the future.

BECAUSE OF THE SHEER SPEED OF THE GAME, WEREN'T YOU WORRIED THAT ALL YOUR FANTASTIC VISUALS WOULD SIMPLY STREAK PAST THE PLAYER IN A BLUR?

There is a Replay Editor that in 'advanced' allows you to trigger camera changes and highlight the best parts of a replay so you can show them off to your friends. It's an awesome feature and we've spent hours just playing with it in amazement at how awesome we can board... in *SSX* that is.

HOW, AND ON WHAT OCCASIONS, WILL THE VAUNTED 'REAL-TIME MUSIC' FADING BE USED TO HEIGHTEN THE FEELING FOR THE GAMER?

There're two aspects to the music fading and real-time music mixing. The fading is triggered by getting big air, so as you launch the music pulls back and the environmental sound effects, like wind, become more prominent in the soundscape. This really amplifies the airtime experience.

The real-time music mixing is probably one of the coolest things. As you compete a course, get in better positions and build your adrenaline bar up, the music seamlessly matches tempo and complexity. So at first you'll get the simple break-beats, but as you improve, the song will match your movements and increase the richness of the mix. As with most audio elements, it's awesome because it's subtle.

WHAT HAVE YOU HAD TO DO TO GET SO MUCH OUT OF THE PS2? HOW MUCH OF ITS POTENTIAL IS LEFT UNTAPPED?

A lot of very talented people worked very hard to get things to the level they're at – there is no magic answer. There're plenty of additional things that can be done. If I were to quantify I would say we achieved 70-75%.

HOW MANY ROUTES, INCLUDING SECRETS, ARE THERE ON THE MORE COMPLEX COURSES?

It varies slightly with every track. However, I can confidently say that it'll take many hours and days on each to explore them in detail – I still find paths or secrets that the world builders didn't divulge earlier... usually when I'm racing them and they use it.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO DESIGN SUCH COMPLEX TRACKS?

It took anywhere from two to three months per track. The time to process and splice these worlds was significant – we pushed our tools to the limit.

DESPITE THE WILD, CARTOON ENVIRONMENTS, THE BOARDERS HANDLE MUCH LIKE THEIR REAL WORLD COUNTERPARTS. WHAT WORK WENT INTO DEVELOPING THIS COMPLEX PHYSICS MODEL?

We had an incredibly talented programming team and lead programmer/physics guru. The tuning levers these guys gave us would boggle the average mind... well, the levers boggled ours at least. The number of times we went back to ask: 'So what does this one do', drove them crazy. But it was this ability to tweak, tune the nuances and see the ramifications immediately that allowed us to focus on the exact experience we all wanted, as well as the subtle variances within the different riding styles.

WHAT ASPECT ARE YOU PROUDEST OF IN SSX?

There are so many things that I'm personally proud of with *SSX*. I think the game speaks for itself. It looks, feels and plays like a second generation title, but it's available at launch. The most significant aspect that I'm personally proud of is the team, I'm not sure that without this specific mix of individuals we would have achieved as much. They rock!

IN TWO YEARS TIME, HOW DO YOU THINK PS2 GAMES WILL DELIVER THE 'EMOTION' AND RICH NEW GAMEPLAY EXPERIENCES THAT WE'VE BEEN PROMISED?

Emotion is a reaction to an immersive experience, it's not really a feature. For example, with *SSX* I've found myself talking about the other characters in the game as if they really existed... especially when they give me a whack as I try to get by them. It evokes an emotional response... albeit revenge.

WHY DOESN'T THE SPLIT SCREEN MODE OFFER VERTICAL/HORIZONTAL OPTIONS?

We did a lot of play-testing with both vertical and horizontal split screens, and found that the horizontal split just didn't work at all because of the need to clearly see jump launch points and landing areas. The added horizontal viewing area didn't really provide any benefit. So we felt it only provided a negative experience, and therefore removed it.

DOES THE GAME HAVE AN ON-LINE FUTURE?

We will be paying close attention to how widely accepted the on-line functionality is embraced by gamers, if there's a demand we'll make it part of our plans.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR THE SSX GAMES? SURELY THERE'LL BE ANOTHER?

Without tipping our hat too much, let's just say that this group has already started on our next objectives. **PSM2**

TEAM SSX

THE FACES BEHIND THE GAME

1 ARTIST
- **Name:** Cody Ritchie
- **Snowboarding ability:** (Out of 10) 3.1416
- **Injuries:** Too many to mention
- **Previously worked on:** None
- **Favourite game:** *Unreal Tournament*
- **Hidden talent:** Tattoo collecting, high flying swing back flips

2 ARTIST
- **Name:** Klaus Monies
- **Snowboarding ability:** (Out of 10) In-game... 10. In real life... 10
- **Injuries:** If I don't injure myself I'm not having fun
- **Previously worked on:** I'm a newbie
- **Favourite game:** The *Gran Turismo* Series
- **Hidden talent:** Anti-Terrorism

3 PROGRAMMER
- **Name:** James Thomas
- **Snowboarding ability:** (Out of 10) 10 (in the air) 4 (on landing) 1 (getting off the lift)
- **Injuries:** Yes, and others.
- **Previously worked on:** *Necronom*, *Cytron*, *Wiz'n'Liz* (Amiga), *3D Lemmings*, *The Crow – City of Angels*, *Perfect Weapon* (PS)
- **Favourite game:** *Unreal Tournament*, *Quake 1-3*, *Myth 1* and *2*
- **Hidden talent:** Snowboarding (definitely a hidden one)

4 PROGRAMMER
- **Name:** Darryll Hobson (not pictured)
- **Snowboarding ability:** (Out of 10)7/10 – if Terje Haakonsen is a 10
- **Injuries:** I road rashed my face mountain biking
- **Previously worked on:** Nothing worth mentioning
- **Favourite game:** *Zelda 64*
- **Hidden talent:** I can see through any object

5 ARTIST
- **Name:** Geoff Coates
- **Snowboarding ability:** (Out of 10) Pie
- **Injuries:** There was that one incident with the bidet, but I don't like to talk about it
- **Previously worked on:** Lead artist, *Triple Play*, Sandwich Artist, Subway
- **Favourite game:** Duck Duck Goose 2000
- **Hidden talent:** Stringing together tricks in *SSX* so they make naughty sentences

6 PROGRAMMER
- **Name:** Mike Rayner
- **Snowboarding ability:** (Out of 10) Right in the middle... 5
- **Injuries:** I caught a front edge at high speed. I got some good air and planted head first onto an ice patch. Blacked out. Never been the same since
- **Previously worked on:** *WCW Mayhem* (PS), *Triple Play 1999-2000* (PS), *The Crow* (PS)
- **Favourite game:** *Star Wars* (vector graphics)
- **Hidden talent:** Cheesecake

PRAISE YOU

"The most significant aspect that I'm personally proud of is the team, I'm not sure that without this specific mix of individuals we would have achieved as much. They rock!" *Larry LaPierre on his 27-strong SSX team.*

"Awesome!"

"It's an awesome feature and we've spent hours just playing with it in amusement." *Larry LaPierre goes crazy for SSX's Replay Editor.*

PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

DUNCAN

29 GAMES AT LAUNCH AND 250 NEW TITLES IN VARYING STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT.

This month we're knee-deep in drool. We've got our hands on brand new plot and character details for *The Bouncer*, as well as some screenshots of in-game brawl-action. And if it's a scrap you're after, then wrap your swollen eyes around our *Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2* preview on pg46 – we're battering Michael Jackson around the chops on your behalf... and loving every lip-splitting southpaw haymaker.

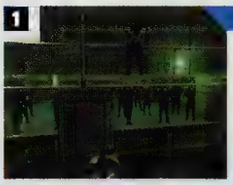
Elsewhere, it's all leather and splintered kneecaps as we get to grips with the painfully realistic bike racer *Moto GP* (we guarantee the collisions will have you reaching for yer helmet), and inbetween chewing crash barriers and *SSX* marathons, the PSM2 team have been slipping back to the future with *Shadow of Memories*. Unfortunately it won't allow us a sneak look at *Resi 4*... if only. **PSM2**

READER TOP TEN GAMES

YOUR MOST WANTED

GT3 and *The Bouncer* still lag behind *MGS2*, but for how long?

1 METAL GEAR SOLID 2



- **DEVELOPER** Konami
- **GAME TYPE** Stealth Adventure
- **ON SALE** Early 2002

Yes, again. Beautiful, but a year away – with masses of quality games just around the corner.

www.konami.com

2 THE BOUNCER

- **DEVELOPER** Free Radical
- **GAME TYPE** Fighting
- **ON SALE** Early 2001

Turn to the preview on pg30, and find out why you're absolutely right to be excited. Do it now.

www.squaresoft.com

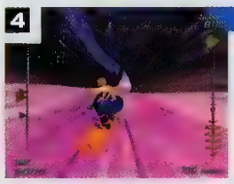
3 GRAN TURISMO 3

- **DEVELOPER** Polyphony Digital
- **GAME TYPE** Racing
- **ON SALE** March 2001

Incredibly fast, but somehow pleasant and relaxing at the same time. If only real driving was this much fun.

www.polyphonydigitial.com

4 SSX



- **DEVELOPER** EA
- **GAME TYPE** Snowboarding
- **ON SALE** Launch

We've been telling you how great it is for the past two months, and it looks like our enthusiasm's catching on.

www.ea.com

5 THE GETAWAY

- **DEVELOPER** Team Soho
- **GAME TYPE** Driving
- **ON SALE** February 2001

Those early shots were gorgeous, but we always had our suspicions about them. See the new ones over the page.

www.playstation.europe.com

6 DEAD OR ALIVE 2

- **DEVELOPER** Tecmo
- **GAME TYPE** Fighting
- **ON SALE** December 2000

It isn't hardcore any more, but we hear the UK version might have an extra character and a playable boss.

www.tecmo.co.jp

7 ISS

- **DEVELOPER** Konami
- **GAME TYPE** Football
- **ON SALE** Launch

Start limbering up – *ISS 2001* will be great when it arrives. The real footie season starts in November ..

www.konami.com

8 SUMMONER

- **DEVELOPER** THQ
- **GAME TYPE** RPG
- **ON SALE** January 2001

Annoyingly, it's recently been delayed to January. Still, gives them plenty of time to get it right.

www.summoner.com

9 TEKKEN TAG

- **DEVELOPER** Namco
- **GAME TYPE** Fighting
- **ON SALE** Launch

The tagging isn't just a gimmick, either. Look out for the final, most brutal part of our tips guide later in this issue.

www.namco.com

10 RIDGE RACER 5

- **DEVELOPER** Namco
- **GAME TYPE** Arcade Racing
- **ON SALE** Launch

We're telling you, it isn't that different from *Type 4*. If you're feeling the need for speed, get *SSX*

www.namco.com

LEAST WANTED: DISNEY'S DINOSAUR

- **DEVELOPER** Ubisoft
- **GAME TYPE** Adventure
- **ON SALE** Launch

Proving, possibly, that no-one really wants a Disney game for their cutting-edge kit. The film's terrible as well.

www.ubisoft.com

MAIL US NOW!

WITH YOUR MOST WANTED GAMES...

Don't have a pop at us, we're just letting you know what you're letting us know. If you can't see the game that you're desperate to play, then mail us. We can share it with everyone **WWW.PSM2.CO.UK**

>SNIKT! シクエカノ

WOLVERINE

Activision have confirmed that they're in the very early stages of working on a PS2 game starring Wolverine, everyone's favourite, socially irresponsible X-Man. They've yet to settle on a developer or even a game concept, but an Activision spokesman has hinted "It could possibly be an action game, although we also we think it could be a stealth game, sort of like a modern *Tenchu*." Which would be news to us, since we thought Wolverine's raison d'etre was slashing up ninjas as loudly as possible.

PSM2 RECKONS *They're already planning a sequel to the undeniably great* Spider-Man, *so the future of the Marvel/Activision partnership looks bright.*

ARACH 'EM UP: *Spider-Man* – the sequel – is also heading to PlayStation 2.

"WHEN YOU'RE IN THE FORM OF EACH MONKEY, YOU START THINKING LIKE THAT MONKEY, AND YOUR INTERFACE GETS REMAPPED ACCORDING TO THAT MONKEY."

KEN LEVINE IRRATIONAL GAMES: The producer of bleak PS2 survival horror *The Lost* on improving *Donkey Kong 64's* system, allowing you to transform into different characters... we think. Source: ign.

PSM2 MOST WANTED

THE TEN GAMES KEEPING THE PSM2 TEAM UP NIGHTS.

1 GRAN TURISMO 3
↑ The most beautiful, realistic racer ever. Except for the car damage

2 METAL GEAR 2
↓ As exciting as ever, but so far away we're having to pace ourselves.

3 THE BOUNCER
✳ The more we hear, the more we like the sound of it

4 COMMANDOS 2
✳ Because we saw The Guns of Navarone the other day, and got excited

5 Z.O.E.
✳ Manga-style robot combat – with a plot! And Hideo Kojima!

6 ONIMUSHA
✳ Stomach-churning samurai action – still no playable version, though.

7 EPHEMERAL FANTASIA
✳ Groundhog Day meets *Final Fantasy* – with guitars. Intriguing.

8 THE LOST
✳ A fantastically disturbing plot from an excellent developer. Welcome to hell.

9 WWF SMACKDOWN 3
✳ Courtesy of the team's solitary excitable wrestling fan. Ahhh.

10 TONY HAWK'S 3
— Hanging in there. Wonder how many points that's worth, then...

OUR LEAST WANTED

You can take your title and...

SKY SURFER
We'll have to review it again next month. This job's not all fun

QUEEN MUTHAS: Ramming a national monument? The detail of the buildings makes it seem *too* real.

CRASH BANDIT COUP: Your knowledge of your turf's going to be invaluable when being pursued.

MAC THE KNIFE: Note the ubiquitous, global fast-food giant on the High Street.

>START THE MOTAH... シクエカノ

THE GETAWAY

Things are starting to gel for Team Soho's ambitious crosstown blag epic.

After our trepidation about the obviously mocked-up shots originally released by Sony, the excitement's back on. Team Soho's promise to recreate a 70km stretch of Central London always seemed overly ambitious, but it's now been done, with varying degrees of success, by *Midnight Club* (see the review on pg96).

Navigating through recognisable streets peppered with familiar landmarks is a sheer joy. With these new shots, it's becoming obvious that *The Getaway* could do the same, but with every shopfront and strip club recreated in loving detail.

PSM2 RECKONS *We're starting to believe. Please, don't let us down, Team Soho.*

MOCK TUDOR: The facades of these buildings are so intricate, it's bloody frightening...

THEATRE OF DREAMS: Pedestrians even dress sharply for the virtual theatre.

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

›HIS AND HUR'S レワヨカノ

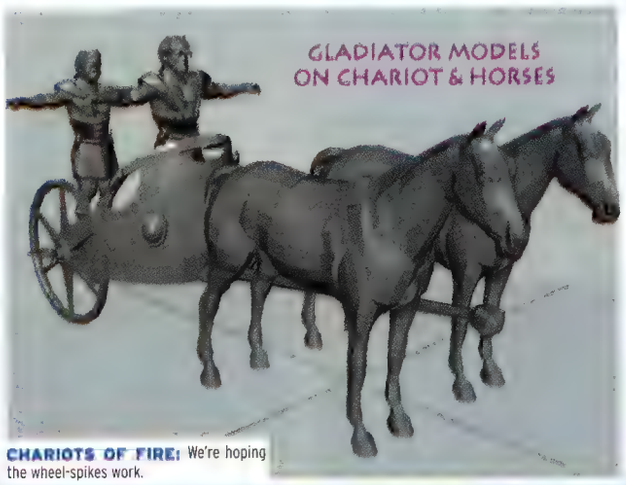
CIRCUS MAXIMUS

Decent boardgame conversions are pretty thin on the ground. Apart from Monopoly the best one we can remember is Escape From Colditz, and that was *years* ago. But Hasbro are looking to reverse that trend with *Circus Maximus*, a conversion of the chariot racing game of the very same name...

It'll mix in a healthy amount of Ben Hur-sized violence with the racing action, and the two-man chariot system means it should include multi-player modes, allowing you to compete against another human, or team up as a driver-fighter chariot team. There's even the possibility of four-player and on-line options.

PSM2 RECKONS *We're not sure how much Gladiator-esque gore it'll include, but charging around in circles on armed chariots does have a certain appeal to it.*

GLAD TO MEET YOU: They're a...



CHARIOTS OF FIRE: We're hoping the wheel-spikes work.

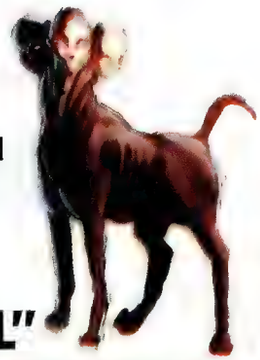
›HELLBOUND レワヨカノ

THE LOST

Think Dante's Inferno crossed with Se7en – a descent into a literal, but very modern, hell with the greedy shuffling around a parody of Las Vegas and the corrupt choked by pollution.

Lead character Amanda Wright loses her daughter in an accident, then makes a pact with the devil to search for her in the underworld. The line-up of developers at Irrational Games includes some of the people behind PC classics like *Thief* and the *System Shock* series, and as with the latter, you'll be able to assume three different identities – light, shadow and corruption – on your way.

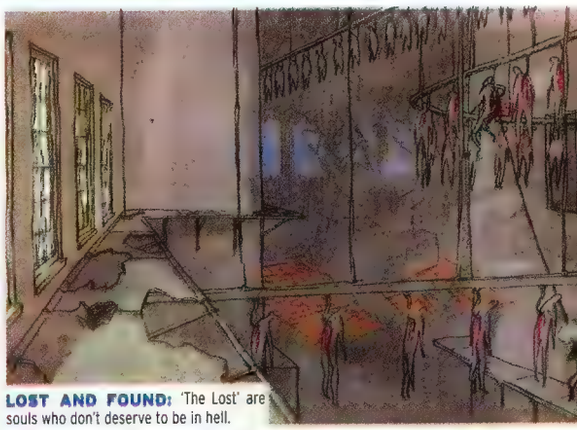
PSM2 RECKONS *The plot is fantastically grim, and the team's promising – you'll be spoilt for choice survival-horror-wise on the PS2.*



"A VERY MODERN HELL"

WRIGHT YOU ARE: This is Amanda, suicidal mum and main character.

DISCO INFERNO: This is cheery concept art - the game looks a lot bleaker.



LOST AND FOUND: 'The Lost' are souls who don't deserve to be in hell.

›THOSE MAGNIFICENT MEN レワヨカノ

SKY GUNNER

Gameplay details are sketchy at best, but Sony Japan have recently released shots of their Manga-style aerial combat game. *Sky Gunner* will feature the now-standard array of insane, big-haired characters, and the dogfighting action will be spiced up by them yelling abuse/taunts at you as they attack, à la *Starwing*. The action's decidedly cartoony, with rickety biplanes and airships taking on rocket bikes, and the control system's interesting – rather than moving your plane on the screen, you move your target area with the Analogue stick, so you can even point out of the screen.

PSM2 RECKONS *It's got a fair way to go – the backgrounds and slowdown need work – but it looks like a fine airborne bun-fight.*

OLDS-MOBILE: Even the space-age vehicles have a pleasing retro feel.

CLOUD NINE: To be honest, the weather effects aren't anything special so far.

TYPECAST: Fat men with handlebar moustaches - evil. Tousle-haired youths - good. See?

SKY HIGH: Move the little yellow circle over your overconfident foe, then riddle him with bullets.

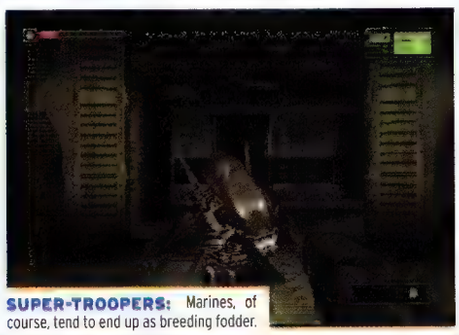
›BUG HUNT レワヨカノ

ALIENS: COLONIAL MARINES

After turning the mildly arty, yet mostly appaling, Alien: Resurrection into an impressively tense first-person shooter, Fox intend to continue Giger-spawned franchise with a real-time 'squad based military action game' along the lines of *Rainbow Six*.

Developers Check-Six don't have any games to their credit so far, although individual members of the team boast experience as diverse as *Mechwarrior 2* and Starship Troopers: The Animated Series.

PSM2 RECKONS *If it captures the claustrophobic feel of Aliens, it'll be a sure-fire winner.*



SUPER-TROOPERS: Marines, of course, tend to end up as breeding fodder.

INCOMING

Unreal Tournament isn't now going to be available at PS2 launch – Infogrames have put its release back to February. What we've played so far is astounding, so three months is a small wait for Deathmatch nirvana.

NOVEMBER 2000 (PS2 LAUNCH)

See launch feature on pg70	

DECEMBER 2000

Moto GP	SCEE
DOA2	SCEE
Jungle Book Groove Party	Ubi Soft
Star Wars: Starfighter	Activision
F1 World Grand Prix	Konami
ESPN X-Games Snowboarding	Konami

JANUARY 2001

Summoner	THQ
Shadowman 2	Acclaim
360 Challenge	Acclaim

FEBRUARY 2001

WipEout Fusion	SCEE
Gran Turismo 3	SCEE
Unreal Tournament	Infogrames

MARCH 2001

Music 2001	Codemasters
LMA Manager 2001	Codemasters
World Snooker 2	Codemasters
The Bouncer	Square
The Gift	Cryo
Rally Championship	Electronic Arts
Superbikes 2001	Electronic Arts
Black and White	Electronic Arts
Need for Speed	Electronic Arts
Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee	Infogrames
F1 2001	SCEE

SPRING 2001

Project Eden	Eidos Interactive
Herdy Gerdy	Eidos Interactive
Commandos 2	Eidos Interactive
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2	Eidos Interactive
Thief 3	Eidos Interactive
Knockout Kings 2001	Electronic Arts
Onimusha: Warlords	Capcom
Zone of the Enders	Konami
Red	Konami
Shadow of Memories	Konami
Ephemeral Fantasia	Konami
Seven Blades	Konami
Top Gun	Titus
RoboCop	Titus
Roadsters 2001	Titus
Red Faction	THQ
Evil Dead: Hail to the King	THQ
WWF SmackDown 3	THQ
Oni	Take 2

LATE 2001

Gunslinger	Activision
Street Lethal	Activision
Super Bombad Racing	Activision
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Activision
Star Wars Online	Activision
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	Activision
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	Activision
Shawn Palmer's Pro Cross	Activision
Final Fantasy 10 and 11	Square
Kengo	Crave
Eternal Ring	Crave
Evergrace	Crave
Armoured Core 2	Crave
Virtual Ocean	Crave
Rock'n Megastage	Jaleco
Dream Audition	Jaleco
Navy Seals	Jaleco
ESPN NBA 2Night	Konami
ESPN National Hockey Night	Konami
Age of Empires 2	Konami
Silent Hill 2	Konami
Metal Gear Solid 2	Konami
Jurassic Park 3	Konami
Tour de France	Konami
Terminator	Konami
DrumMania	Konami
Eternal Blade	Mattel Interactive
VIP	Ubi Soft
Peacemakers	Ubi Soft
Evil Twin	Ubi Soft
Jacques Villeneuve Racing	Ubi Soft
The Road to Eldorado	Ubi Soft
Suzuki 2	Ubi Soft
Rayman 3	Ubi Soft
Speed Devils 2	Ubi Soft
Army Men: Air Attack 2	3DO
Crusaders of Might and Magic	3DO
WDL: Thundertanks	3DO
Army Men 2: Sarge's Heroes	3DO
High Heat	3DO

TO BE CONFIRMED

Aliens Colonial Marines	Fox Interactive
No One Lives Forever	Fox Interactive
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy	Midway
Off-Road Thunder	Midway
Dark Cloud	Midway
Drakan	Activision
Evo Rally	Infogrames
Madden NFL 2001	Electronic Arts
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001	Electronic Arts
NHL 2001	Electronic Arts
NBA Live 2001	Electronic Arts
The World Is Not Enough	Electronic Arts
Syphon Filter 3	SCEE
Cool Boarders: Code Alien	SCEE
Golf Paradise	SCEE
Twisted Metal: Black	SCEE
Extermination	SCEE
Popolocrois 3	SCEE
Golf Paradise	SCEE
IQ Remix+	SCEE
Grand Theft Auto 3D	Take 2
MDK Armageddon	Virgin
Run Like Hell	Virgin
Silpheed	Virgin
Gun Griffon Blaze	Virgin
WCW Mayhem	Electronic Arts
NASCAR 2001	Electronic Arts
Resident Evil 4	Capcom
Maximo	Virgin
Titanium Angels	SCi
Starsky and Hutch	Empire
Ghostmaster	Empire
Klonoa 2	Namco
Seven	Namco
Bloody Roar 3	Namco
Wolverine	Activision
Spider-Man	Activision
Superman	Activision
Sky Odyssey	Activision
Unison	Tecmo
Kessen 2	KOEI
Stunt Driver	Climax
War Monkeys	TalonSoft
Nooks and Crannies	TBA Software

This list correct – to the best of PSM2's knowledge – as this issue went to press.

SION BARZAHD
BOUNCER No.1
The youngest member of The Bouncer crew, Sion (pronounced see-on) is modelled here in 3D by Big Sesh Studios for PSM2's US sister mag, Next Gen. Look at that detail

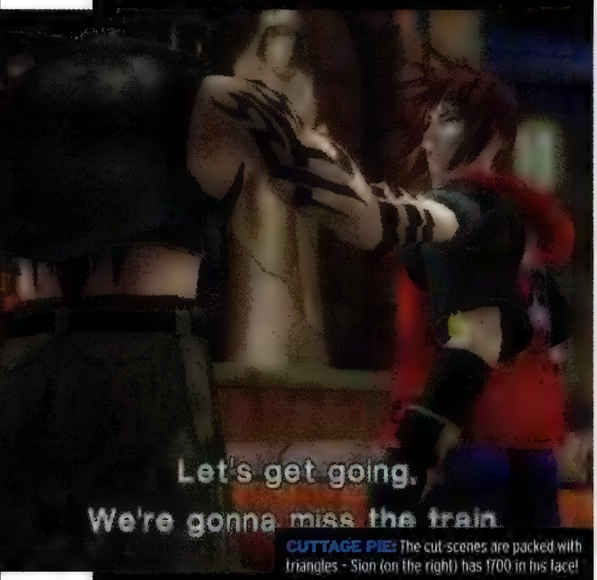
EXPECTED UK / SPRING 2001 / JAPAN / DEC 2000

THE BOUNCER

Square's strict door policy has left us with some beautifully rendered images, but a paucity of in-game action. If it plays like it looks, consider us a drooling mess.

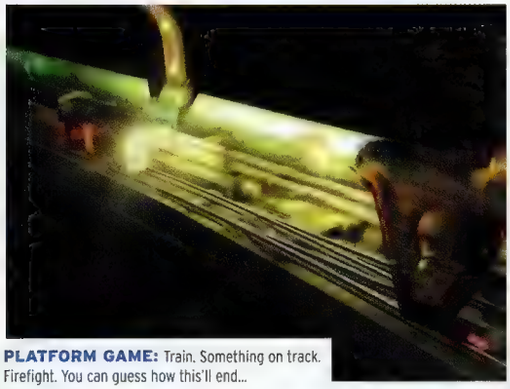
FACE FACTS

Although the cut-scenes are intended to blend seamlessly with the main game, close-ups and facial animation use a more detailed versions of the main characters. Sion, for instance, is made up of 6700 triangles during the linking segments, but reverts to a slightly less detailed 3000 polygon model in the game.



CUTTAGE PIE: The cut-scenes are packed with triangles - Sion (on the right) has 1700 in his face!

MONKEY MAGIC After seeing Sion up a tree we put our money on him being the 'nimble, but weak' one.



PLATFORM GAME: Train. Something on track. Firefight. You can guess how this'll end...

ONE VOLT CHARGE: He's bulky and angry, best get out the way...

TOUGH GLOVE: Or you'll get one of these amongst your dental work.

THE STORY SO FAR

The story, hidden away among all the lush cinematics, goes something like this: Dominique, a young girl recently adopted as the Fate Bar's mascot, is taken hostage, and you've got to get her back. So, rescue a kidnapped girl. Fight through a bar, a subway train and some warehouses. To be honest, we can't think of a scrolling fighter where this *hasn't* been the extent of the plot – from the seminal *Double Dragon*, through to *Final Fight* and *Streets of Rage*. While this kind of classic simplicity's all very nostalgic, it's nice to know that *The Bouncer* should be a bit more involved. How is Volt connected to Mikado? What do they want with Dominique? What actually happened to Sion's girlfriend? Find out, by playing as the character you most identify with.

"YOU LOOK DIVAN" Is this Dominique, and if it is, who the heck is he?

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Square
- **PUBLISHER** Squaresoft
- **GAME TYPE** Action Adventuring
- **COMPLETE** 50 percent

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Scrolling fighting action.
- Three main characters.
- Simultaneous four-player mode.
- Story mode with alternative endings.
- Eerie motion blur camerawork gives the game unique look.
- Underlying theme of love.

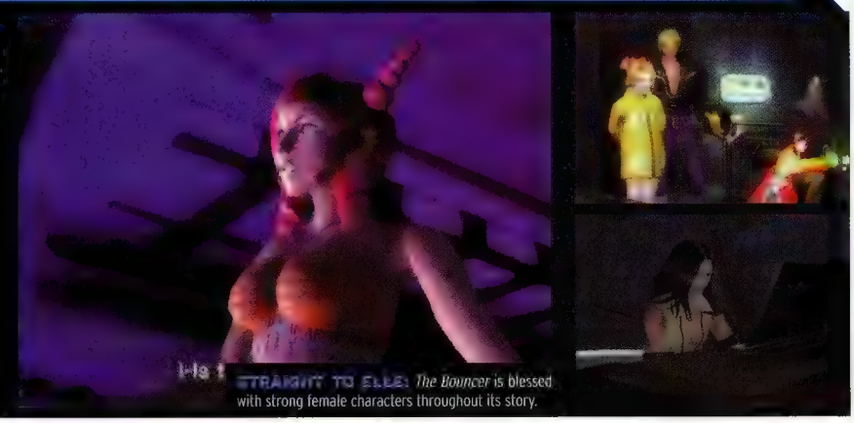
So far, mighty Squaresoft's *Bouncer*-related output has consisted of a handful of movies, the odd snippet of plot information and an eerie silence on the subject of gameplay. Because of this, it's become one of the PS2's most enigmatic, yet eagerly anticipated games, with some oddly luminescent screenshots only fuelling speculation.

The reason for some of the secrecy, at least, has become clear – Square have only recently started focusing on gameplay, after an intensive period of character and story development. The intention, it seems, is to provide gameplay experiences that actually reflect each character's personality. It's an unprecedented approach, and one which further blurs the line between a game with occasional cut-scenes and a cinematic experience. **PSM2**

Expected to hit Japan at the end of this year and the US in January, The Bouncer won't be available in Europe until spring.

TRUE ROMANCE

It's becoming quite common for Japanese game directors to base their work around an over-arching theme – *MGS2*'s is genetic inheritance, while *Z.O.E.*'s is death. Asked about *The Bouncer*, Tokita says: "The theme is pretty much love, but in the broader definition of the concept of love." Considering the tangled relationship histories of the main protagonists, we're just hoping it doesn't go all Sunset Beach on us.



STRAIGHT TO ELLE: *The Bouncer* is blessed with strong female characters throughout its story.

FIGHTING IN FOUR-MATION

Slightly disappointingly, the Story mode will only allow one player to take part in the violence, choosing a different member of the main trio every time trouble kicks off. However, the game is set to include at least least three sub-modes which will take advantage of the PS2 MultiTap 2, including Versus and Team Battle options, for which extra moves and characters can be obtained during the story.

KOU'S A SKANKER: We've seen some moves and combos, but not any killer finishes.

GROUP THUG: Three characters on screen, but you can only use one at a time.

PUNCH PUNK: He looks hard, but some of the moves would look more at home on the dancefloor.

A WHOLE LEAP OF TROUBLE: Volt looks like the powerhouse of the trio with this huge move.

PUT 'EM UP: These rubber-suited gimps provide a large number of the game's punchbags...

SOMETHING WILL TURN-UP: The M.S.P.D. appear to be fair game as well... but look at those jeans...

IN THE STUDIO

- **WRITER/DIRECTOR** Takshi Tokita
- **CHARACTER DESIGN** Tetsuya Nomura
- **COMPOSERS** Noriko Matsueda and Takahiko Eguchi

TEAM HISTORY

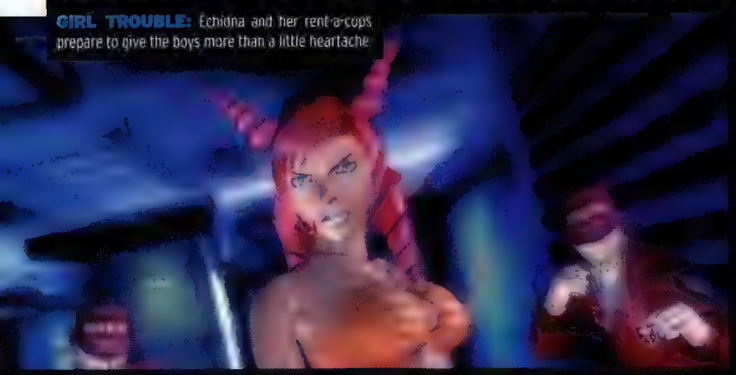
The *Final Fantasy* team returns, although this time they're emphasising fast-paced head-breaking rather than turn-based magical combat. Takashi's been working on the series since the beginning, also holding director credits on the likes of *Chrono Trigger* and *Parasite Eve*, while Nomura's best known for his character design in *FF7* and *8* – and, of course, for *Eve*'s lovely Aya.

FOR MORE INFO

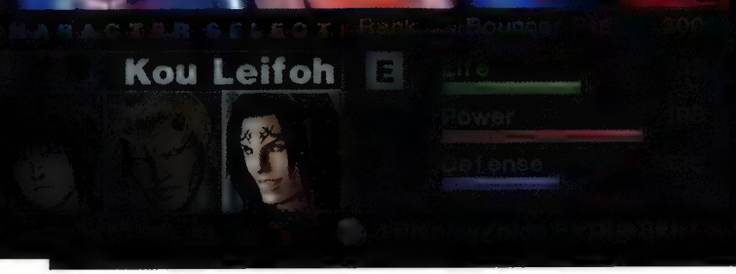
www.playonline.com/square-top/

INSTANT REPLAY

Typically, the problem with *Bouncer*-style fighting games is their longevity – they tend to be slightly linear, and bashing through the early levels quickly gets tedious. *The Bouncer's* Story mode is only expected to take about seven or eight hours to play through, but will offer multiple paths and those now-ubiquitous alternative endings for added replay value. In another attempt to encourage repeated goes, characters can be customised with special moves at certain points during the game.



GIRL TROUBLE: Echidna and her rent-a-cops prepare to give the boys more than a little heartache.



GRAPPLES AND PAIRS: Tool up your character with a selection of attacks.

SCREEN GENIE: Choose one of the three characters, and the game will let you customise them...

BUILD 'EM UP: Extra skills appear to be affected by the rank of your character.

EVERYBODY'S KUNG-FU FIGHTING

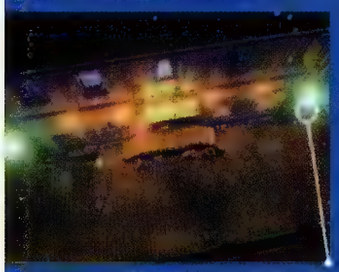
With around ten characters on the screen at once, most of these being enemies, avoiding confusion is a key gameplay concern. To deal with this, the player's character will always remain in the centre of the screen during the in-game action. Enemies will be able to attack from behind – something that traditionally presents a problem in this type of game – but their AI has been altered so that they won't take unfair advantage of this.

CENTRE OF ATTENTION: Playing as Volt, you command the centre of the melee...

SPLIT DECISION: ... while Sion and Kou work the flanks. It doesn't look good for the M.S.P.D.

CITY LIGHTS

To say that a PS2 game includes motion blur and depth-of-field camera work is verging on tautology these days, but *The Bouncer* has an undeniably unique look to it. Despite taking place in a series of rain-spattered back alleys, it's almost eerily bright, with neon signs everywhere and characters who almost seem to glow.

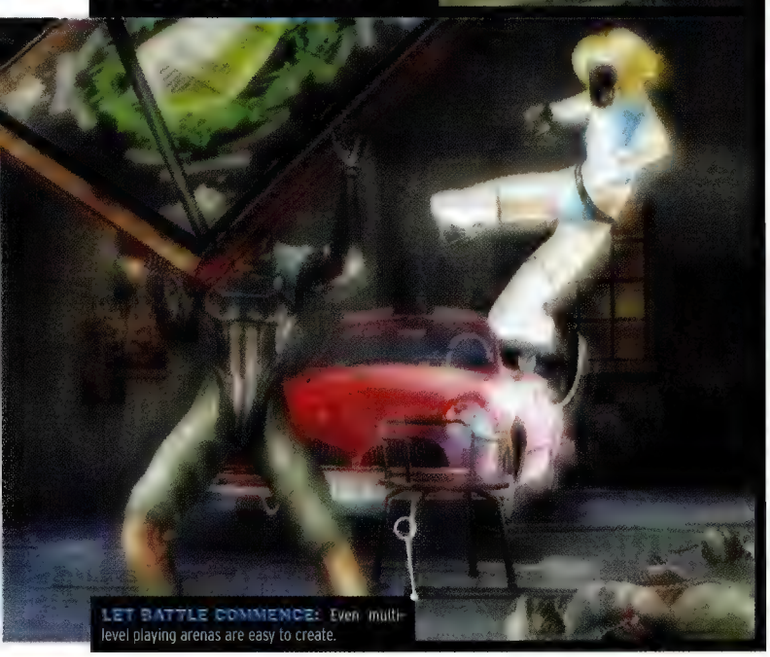


GLOW NOW: This shot captures *The Bouncer*'s stylised look perfectly – look at that luminosity.

NEON NIGHTS: The seedy backstreets take their atmosphere from wet, neon light-sources.

WRECK THE CASBAH

So far, Tokita-san has politely declined to answer questions about whether the fighters will be able to use weapons, although when pressed about the possibility of breaking a chair over someone's head, answered: "The style of fighting requires you to beat the enemy with your skills." After the box-flinging delights of *Ehrgeiz*, we'll be disappointed if the backgrounds are completely superfluous, but at least we've been told that fighting from higher ground will confer an advantage. Although we're not sure how.



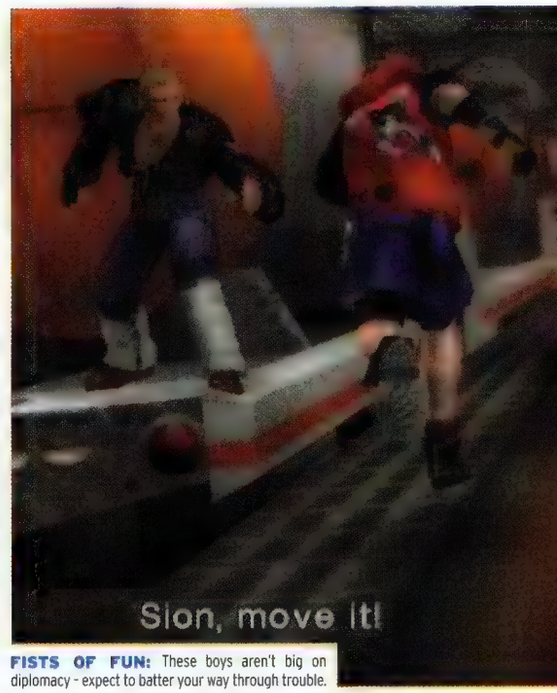
LET BATTLE COMMENCE: Even multi-level playing arenas are easy to create.

SPEAK EASY: We're yet to hear any of the main characters' voice characterisations...

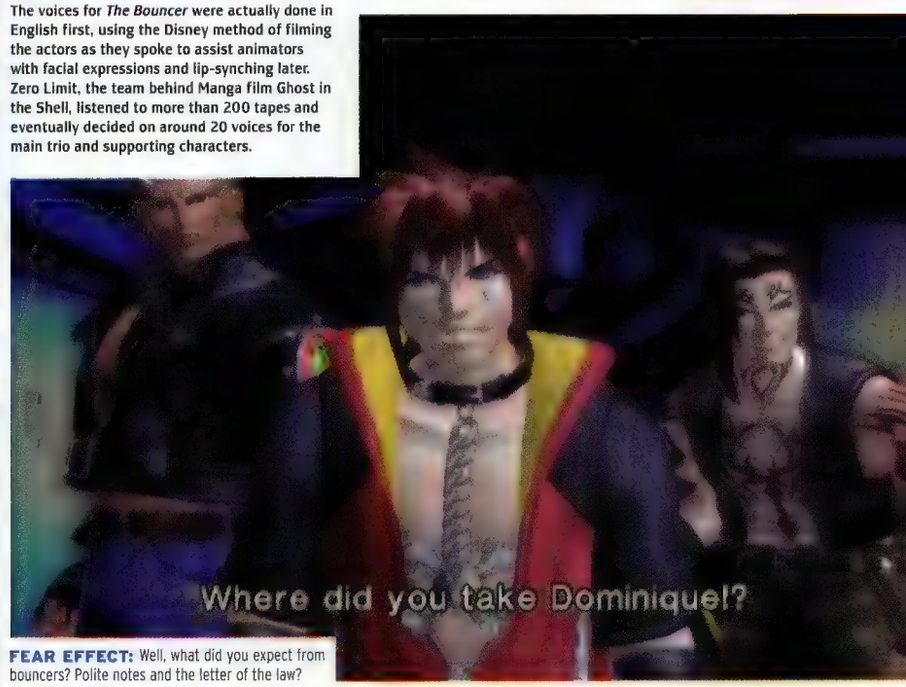
TAKE CHAT: Where we expect Volt and Kou to sound like beefy madmen, Sion looks a bit squeaky to us.

HEARING VOICES

The voices for *The Bouncer* were actually done in English first, using the Disney method of filming the actors as they spoke to assist animators with facial expressions and lip-synching later. Zero Limit, the team behind Manga film Ghost in the Shell, listened to more than 200 tapes and eventually decided on around 20 voices for the main trio and supporting characters.



FISTS OF FUN: These boys aren't big on diplomacy – expect to batter your way through trouble.



FEAR EFFECT: Well, what did you expect from bouncers? Polite notes and the letter of the law?

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

At key points, the player will be asked to choose which of the three bouncers to control, with certain choices being more appropriate dependant on the situation. According to Tokita, the team follows that age-old group dynamic of including a sensible one, a cool one and a comedy one. Also, it should be possible to access the villains as Versus characters by finishing the Story mode.

SION BARZAHD

The youngest of the crew and an introvert after losing his girlfriend, also the first to befriend Dominique. Doesn't look much like a bouncer, frankly.

VOLT KRUEGER

The strong, silent type. Has a 'No Sabotender' sign on his jacket – an in-joke for *Final Fantasy* fans – and lots of piercings, which we can't help feeling would present a hindrance in a fight.

KOU LEIFOH

The arrogant, talkative one, with a mysterious past linked to the Mikado corporation. Big on tattoos, and nails with it. Tokita-san's favourite character.

DOMINIQUE CROSS

Pals with the world's three hardest blokes, but still kidnapped by the Mikado group. Evil corporations, eh? They never learn.

MUGETSU

Superpowered leader of the Mikado Special Forces that originally kidnap Dominque. Dressed like a gimp, and probably not too attractive either. Hence '...and the ugly'. See?

ECHIDNA

Supervisor at Mikado, possible ex-girlfriend of Volt and quite probably the game's main bad guy. Also has vaguely spiky hair, which is the closest link we can find with the spiny marsupial she's named after.

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

TRIPLE TROUBLE: Square can render all they like - we want to see some action now...

PSM2 GUT REACTION

Since the best four-player fighting game we can remember is the OK-ish *Wu Tang: Taste the Pain*, a really good brawl-em-up would be a revelation. We're a little bit apprehensive since no-one's actually had a go on it yet, but earlier Square efforts such as the *Tobal* series and *Ehrgeiz* were solidly playable, if a bit lacking in depth. Of course, breathtakingly beautiful graphics and cinema-standard production values won't harm its chances. Those members of PSM2's staff who grew up with *Final Fight* are looking to this as the next stage of fighting evolution.

+ Looks set to batter *Fighting Force* into a messy pulp, and give *MGS2* a run for its money in the bid to be a truly interactive movie.
- Of course, it could be mindlessly repetitive button-mashing. No-one knows for sure.

FEEL THE NOISE

Get ready to stump up for some more kit if you want to take full advantage of your PS2. *The Bouncer* will use Dolby Surround Sound in its cut scenes, allowing some clever effects – the characters walking around you as they talk – as well as more subtle ambient background noises. Audio engineers at Square Sound have also speculated that they may be able to include this feature in the actual gameplay, a technological innovation that wasn't previously believed possible, even on next-gen machines.

THE BIG BOSS

Part of the shady Mikado corporation, who are heavily into space exploration, robotics and kidnapping.

MYSTERY WOMAN

Another enigmatic new character. Plays the piano and looks like love interest material.

MINISTRY OF SOUND

The Bouncer will be released on DVD, and Norika Matsueda and Takahiko Eguchi started work at the storyboard stage to compose theme music for specific events and characters. We applaud the increasing importance of in-game tunes, and our only reservation is the cringingly-titled *Love is the Gift*, produced by frequent Mariah Carey collaborator Michael Walden as the game's lead song.

"KICK 'IM IN THE BALLADS" We're not entirely happy about this trend for soggy warbling.

TRUE STEPPER: Nice to see that you can still dish out the pain on uneven surfaces...

BLUR WITCH: Despite the lack of info on the combat system, we're pleased with the variety of moves...

WATER WORKS? But we'll have to wait to see if this opponent ends up in the fountain.

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MIST ME: PS2 hardware allows realistic mist to envelop your character and add to the general unsettling nature of the whole *Silent Hill 2* world.

EXPECTED UK XMAS 2001

SILENT HILL 2

The Hill's alive with the sound of puuu-king. Konami serve up the horror in PS2's goriest game yet...

It might have been too hard for some tastes, but there's no doubt that *Silent Hill* took the horror game to new heights of fear and sensory immersion, and away from the chainsaw-reliant, slash-and-run gore genre that the *RE* series spawned.

The good news is that the sequel intends to use the vastly expanded power of PlayStation 2 to take fear effect to a whole new level. Released at the recent Tokyo Game Show, these first screenshots show disgusting amorphic monsters, swirling volumetric fog (not the draw-distance limiting 'cheat' of old) and the promise of a storyline as disturbing as the first.

It might still be a long way off, but it's good to know Konami are already planning our next nightmare. PSM2

Silent Hill 2 should arrive by Christmas 2001.

INFO

DEVELOPER
- Konami

PUBLISHER
- Konami

GAME TYPE
- Action/Horror

COMPLETE
- 15 percent

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Genuine fog effects to generate atmosphere
- All-new cast of characters and enemies
- Movie-quality camerawork.

WELCOME TO THE TERROR!

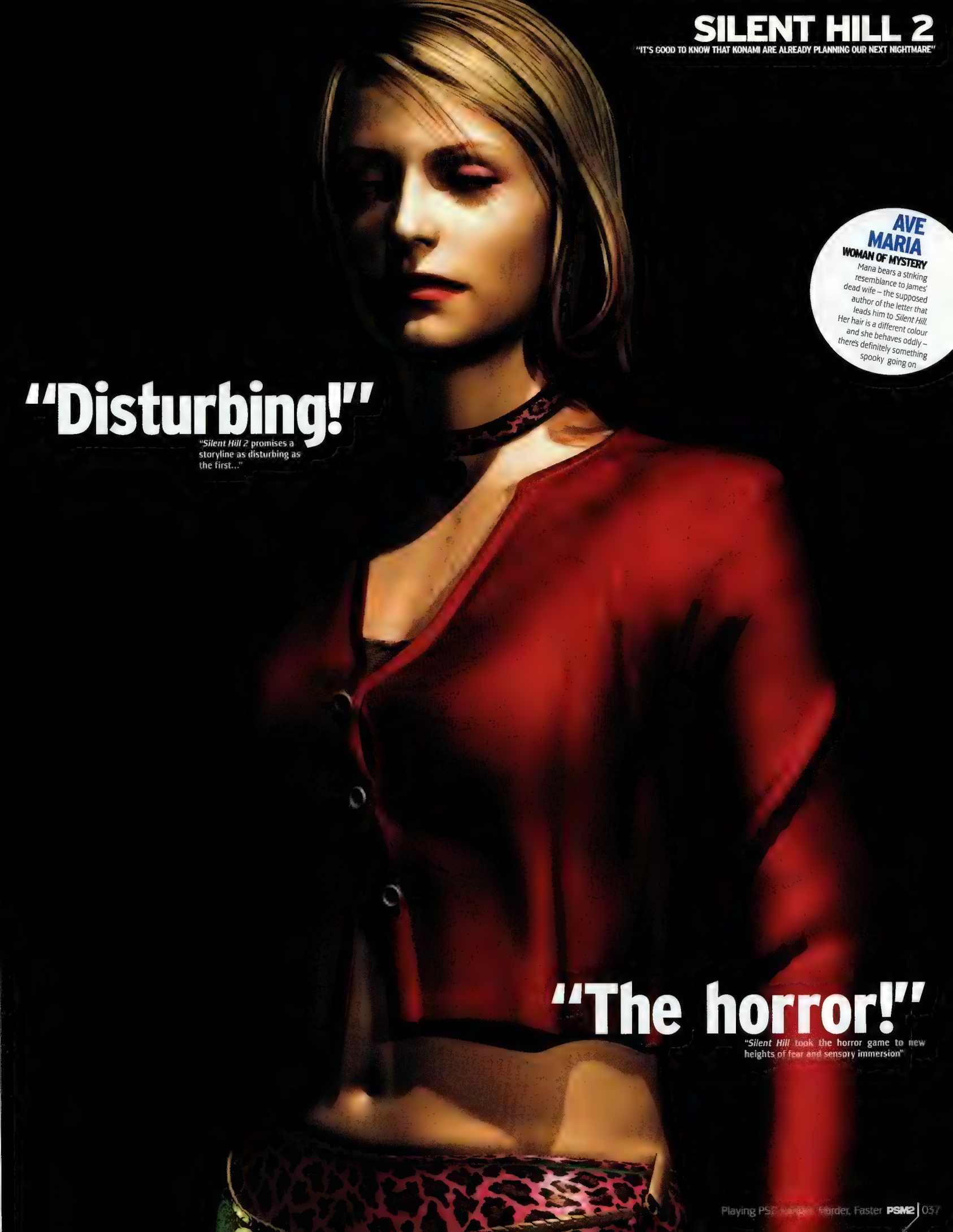
***Silent Hill 2*'s storyline bears no relation to that of the first game, other than it being set in the same town of Silent Hill – they've obviously done some major street repairs since the first instalment. The main character – the guy we'll play as – is James Sanderland. He's been drawn into the dark world of *Silent Hill* by a letter from his wife, a woman who's supposed to have been dead for three years...**

LEANIN' ON A LAMPPOST: The backgrounds we've seen have an ethereal quality about them.

STRANGE L'IL GIRL: We suspect that peripheral characters will, once again, affect your destiny.

SILENT HILL 2

"IT'S GOOD TO KNOW THAT KONAMI ARE ALREADY PLANNING OUR NEXT NIGHTMARE"



AVE MARIA

WOMAN OF MYSTERY

Maria bears a striking resemblance to James' dead wife – the supposed author of the letter that leads him to *Silent Hill*. Her hair is a different colour and she behaves oddly – there's definitely something spooky going on

"Disturbing!"

"*Silent Hill 2* promises a storyline as disturbing as the first..."

"The horror!"

"*Silent Hill* took the horror game to new heights of fear and sensory immersion"

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

MISSING LINK: A shot from Konami's demo, showing James confronting a shambler...

PEA SOUPER!

■ *Silent Hill*'s fog was probably more a result of the original PlayStation's technical limitations – cover things up with fog, less for CPU to calculate, game moves at acceptable rate. However, the fact that you could never really ever see that much added loads to the claustrophobic horror atmosphere. Tetsuhiro Imamura – Director of *Silent Hill 2* – has spoken of his desire to see the second game full of real fog – the kind that could suddenly swirl up and envelop characters and scenery. This also means that as James walks along, his movement can cause the fog to swirl around him, clearing a path as he moves.

IN THE STUDIO

■ **DIRECTOR** Tetsuhiro Imamura

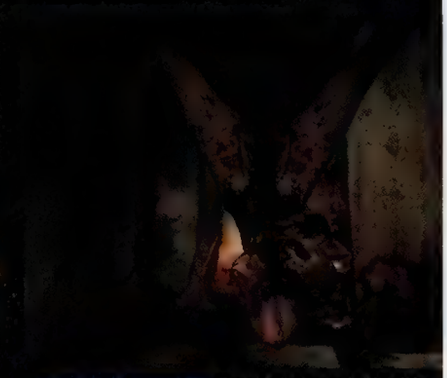
TEAM HISTORY
As general manager for Konami, he's also overseeing the production of the rest of their line-up.

FOR MORE INFO
www.konami.co.jp

HOW TO BUILD THE PERFECT MONSTER...

Seeing the brief demo movie recently exhibited by Konami, it's clear that the concept for *Silent Hill 2*'s numerous monsters is not the product of a wholesome, healthy mind. With a heavy accent on the 'molten flesh' look, it seems as if the bad guys start off in human form, like the nurse below, and then seem to degrade and decay into ever more disgusting shapes and forms. The game's creators have rejected motion capture to animate them, resorting instead to individual 'by hand' treatments to get completely unnatural, non-human ways of moving.

NURSE, THE SCREAMS! Be afraid – her rubber glove's well greased and she's hungry for examination...



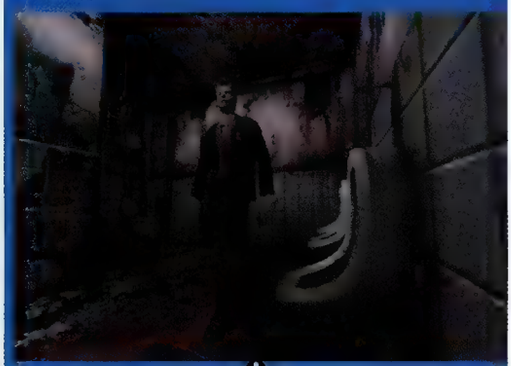
[illegible]: It used to be human, but this thing seems to be in the process of some God-awful metamorphosis.

ESCAPE APOLOGIST: Hmm, you can almost smell the rotting offal bursting out of the skin, can't you?

ESPRIT DE CORPSE: This is the way we prefer our undead. No word as yet as to how James will be dispatching his foe.

CENSOR - BAITING

From what we've seen of the game already, it's clear that *Silent Hill 2* will be one of the PlayStation 2's first games to carry a BBFC (British Board of Film Classification) certification. The first game came in as a '15' and we'd expect Konami to try and avoid an '18' rating for the sequel – with the recent fuss created by American Vice-Presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman, both Sony and Konami will be keen to avoid too much controversy.



DOG TROTTER: The action looks likely to be seen from separate camera viewpoints

PSM2 GUT REACTION

PlayStation 2 games are spearheading gaming's change from simple button-pushing tests of dexterity towards innovative, interactive, dramatic storytelling. We think that *Silent Hill 2* will be at the forefront of this, one of the most exciting developments in game creation currently in progress. When you couple this with the fact that game is also certain to be one of the scariest titles ever to worry your underwear, you have our reasons for placing *Silent Hill 2* as one of most eagerly awaited titles of next year.

+ Horrific atmosphere by the cavern-load.
- We hope Konami will stand up to America's anti-games moral crusade and keep the horror cranked up to eleven.

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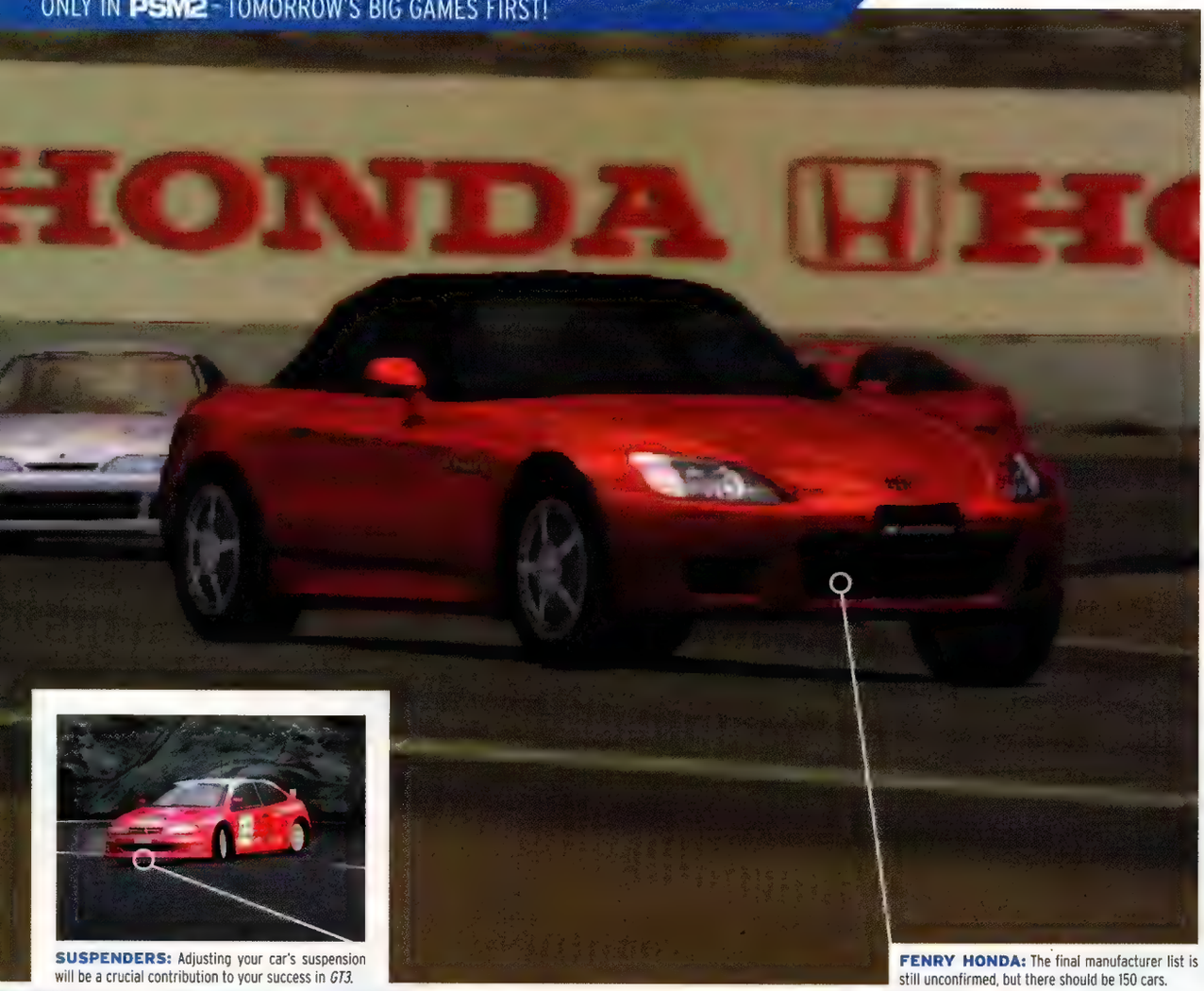


SUSPENDERS: Adjusting your car's suspension will be a crucial contribution to your success in *GT3*.

FENRY HONDA: The final manufacturer list is still unconfirmed, but there should be 150 cars.

KEEPING IT REAL

So how realistic can you expect *GT3* to be? Here's some examples of how the team at Polyphony Digital are maximising the potential of PS2:

- **They've taken digital photographs of all the real GT cars, snapping everything from the speedo to the engine, and sampled the individual muffler and engine sounds. Each car then takes between a week and two weeks to model on PS2.**
- **Using the DualShock 2 Analogue buttons, they're ensuring you can control the pressure of the brakes.**
- **The frame-rate's been increased from 30fps (*GT2*) to 60fps (*GT3*), so suspension and tyre performance have been improved.**

FUDGE TUNNEL: There seems to be no problem with the redraw distance - see the trees at the end?

MARIAH FLAREY: Tearing round a track at 122 km/h is the only way to see in a photo-realistic sunset.

EXPECTED UK FEBRUARY 2001 JAPAN JANUARY 2001

GRAN TURISMO 3

New name, new shots, new info. PSM2 brings you the latest big surprises about the PlayStation 2 racer to die for – do not adjust your eyes, these are genuine shots from the latest build of the game...

The biggest revelation from the development studios of Polyphony Digital this month, is that *Gran Turismo's* undergone a swift name change. The reason for this is clear – the next-gen racer definitely won't be released anywhere until early next year. *GT2000* as a name could have conceivably given the impression (to non-gamers, presumably) that it was out-of-date. And '*GT2001*' doesn't really have the same edge to it.

But more importantly, from a playing point of view, is the news that the game will support multi-player play through the PS2 i-Link port.

This means that, with two PS2s, two TVs and an i-Link cable, two players can experience full-screen head-to-head *Gran Turismo*. It might cost around a grand and a little bit of hassle to get the full multi-player experience then (there'll be a regular split-screen mode built in for those of us who aren't so well off), but the way the game's improving as the months go by, the effort and expense looks like it'll be worth it.

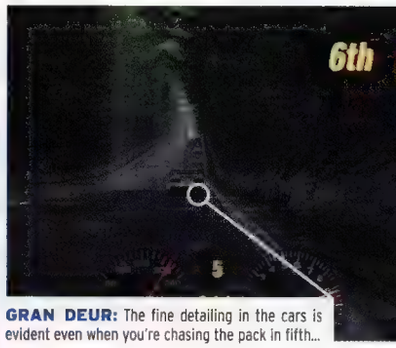
PSM2's message to *GT3's* producer, Kazunori Yamauchi and the rest of his R&D team at Polyphony Digital is: take your time, old son. We can wait a couple of extra months if you need them to get the features of the game balanced to perfection. Just try and speed up a bit, eh? **PSM2**

See issues #1 and #2 for earlier shots from Gran Turismo 2000. The game won't be released until early next year.

GRAN TURISMO™

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Polyphony Digital
- **PUBLISHER** SCEE
- **GAME TYPE** Racing Sim
- **COMPLETE** 85 percent



GRAN DEUR: The fine detailing in the cars is evident even when you're chasing the pack in fifth...

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

SPICE TRACK

GT3's still on target for a total of 15 courses, including a track set in Seattle and a brand new one in Monte Carlo. Another new circuit is one based in Tokyo – expect to be battling with other super-aggressive drivers at blistering speed along skyscraper-lined highways. The detailing in the trackside scenery is varied, with you bursting through a dimly lit tunnel on one course, then entering a sunset-drenched cityscape on another.

TRIAL MOUNTAIN: A striking course, packing in tunnels, trees and one exceptionaly long straight.

SEATTLE CIRCUIT: A built-up circuit full of sharp turns rather than smooth corners.

LAGUNA RACEWAY: This one's all about speed. The sprint for victory at Laguna takes place at sunset.

IN THE STUDIO

PRODUCER
Kazunori Yamauchi

TEAM HISTORY

Yamauchi-san is the designer of the *Gran Turismo* games, as well as being the Executive Vice President of Polyphony Digital. The company has over 60 employees, with 40 alone working on the development of *GT2* for PSone (complete with five programmers and two project leaders), which was released in the UK back in January of this year. In April 1998, Polyphony Digital became the fourth development studio for Sony Computer Entertainment. Their next game after *GT3* will be either an RPG/adventure game or another racer.

FOR MORE INFO

www.polyphonydigital.com

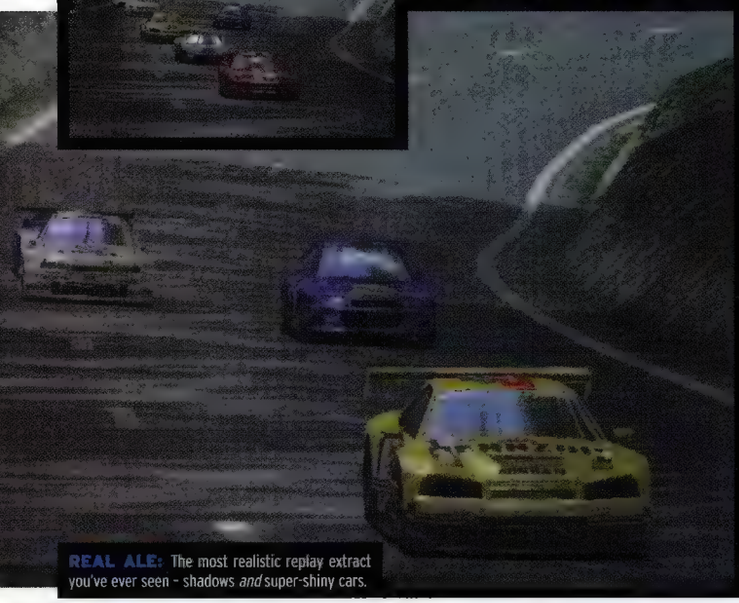
REPLAY ME

Back in 1997, *Gran Turismo* shocked the world with its ultra-realistic replay mode. It was like watching yourself slide about the place in a real televised race. It really was *that good*, although you're driving might not have been... Three years and the odd month later, and the refined and polished *GT3* promises to make even *GT*'s luxurious repeats look rather clunky...

IMPREZAIVE: Entering the tunnel on Trial Mountain, the blue Impreza takes the initiative.

SIX BACK: The Impreza's fallen behind. Looks like its straight-line speed can't match the others in the pack.

TONY BLUR: Some of that gorgeous defocusing mixed with... isn't that a heat haze?



REAL ALE: The most realistic replay extract you've ever seen - shadows *and* super-shiny cars.

CLEAR WINNER: The fantastic in-camera composition means you never lose sight of your car.

CAR WARS: Our cash is on the Honda in this battle for the racing line in Laguna.

BIG CITY STICK: The replays give you a chance to take in the full splendour of the scenery.

MODEL CARS

The bad news is that *GT3* will only feature 150 cars compared to the 500 or so in *GT2*. But the great news is that the new cars will be more than ten times as detailed – using 5000 polygons each as opposed to a mere 300 in the original. Yamauchi recently showed PSM2 a particularly terrific close up of a Lotus Esprit where the shimmering reflections off the wheel trims had to be seen to be believed. He wants each model to resemble a miniature version of the real thing, so cars now take up to two weeks to create compared to one day in the old games. But whilst car numbers are down, there's no reduction in the overall number of manufacturers.

STEER CLEAR: The *GT* Force wheel (and pedals) promises pinpoint control of your selected *GT* car...

SUBARU: This is the Impreza WRX Rally Edition, decked out in the decals of the Subaru World Rally Team (see *http://www.swrt.com/*). This is a 4WD car which is well suited to the winding roads of the Trial Mountain course.

NISSAN: Here's the Skyline GT-R, in the banana yellow Pennzoil race colours. Perfect for tearing up *GT3's* long straights, the GT-R has spawned a huge following (see *http://www.skylinegtr.8k.com/main.htm*).

TOYOTA: The Supra in *GT3* is a fourth generation version of the widely respected model, distributed around the world between 1993 and 1998. Looks a bit too much like a sales exec's set of wheels for our tastes though (for more information, see *http://www.toyotasupra.com/*).

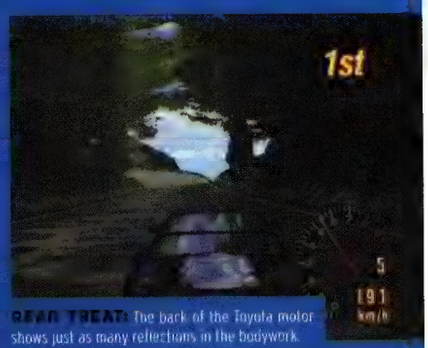
DODGE: The France-based Team ORECA won the GT2 class in the '98 Le Mans 24 hr race (note the PlayStation logo on the bonnet).

LEAFY WONDERLAND

As Yamauchi skidded expertly through one of the new tracks in a recent *GT3* demonstration, a startling new graphic effect caused our jaws to fall off. As the car haired through a leafy pinewood straight, a series of brilliant sun sprays filtered through the foliage, casting spots of radiant beauty onto the tarmac. To get this straight, these weren't the sweeping semi-transparent laser beams of PSone games past but intangible wispy particles of real light. Members of the PSM2 stumbled away mesmerised, burbling excitedly "BLOODY HELL... it's just like real life..."

KEEP OFF THE GLASS : Just look at the sky, cloud and tree reflections on the Supra.

SPECIAL BRANCH: The light filtering through the trees creates a mesh of realistic branch shadows.



REAR TREAT: The back of the Toyota motor shows just as many reflections in the bodywork.

DANGEROUS FX: [illegible] instead of the road, at 120km/h could be messy...

ONLY THIS COULD BE DONE ON PS2...

Heat waves rippling up from car exhausts and shimmering off roasting tarmac have never been authentically recreated in a videogame. Until now. *Gran Turismo 3* marks the beginning of a new era in console racing. Admittedly, they're more striking in *GT3*'s sumptuous replays, but even so, you still have a hard time convincing yourself that *this isn't real*.

HOT BODY: Eye candy it may be, but it's so God damn *real* you'll be glued to the replays. Touches like this ensure *GT3* remains high in PSM2's Most Wanted.

FEATURES

- 150 accurately-modelled cars (average of 4500 polygons per car).
- 15 tracks.
- New Rally mode.
- Improved Tuning mode – there's an emphasis on effectively balancing your car's suspension.
- Analogue acceleration and braking.
- Real-time environment mapping – something not possible in *GT2* – which allows the road and scenery to be reflected on the car (particularly effective at night).
- 15th of a second time lag between you inputting a command on the controller and the car responding (compared to *GT2*'s 30th of a second), so cars are easier to control.
- i-Link network feature for full-screen multi-player action across two TVs.
- 60 frames per second frame-rate, meaning suspension is improved – you'll now experience under-steering.

PSM2 GUT REACTION

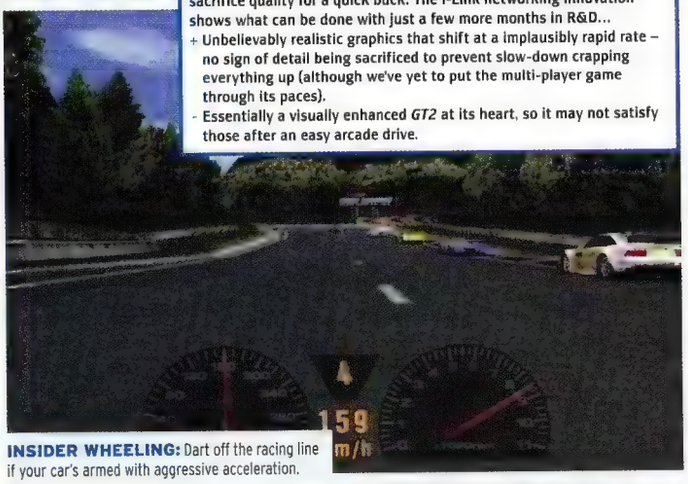
The first PS2 'killer app'? *GT3* certainly will be a game that many people will be desperate to get hold of a PlayStation 2 in order to play. So far, the handling, sense of speed and racing satisfaction all seem to match the slick rendering of the visuals. The fact that the game's been delayed until the end of January is a sign that Polyphony Digital don't want to sacrifice quality for a quick buck. The i-Link networking innovation shows what can be done with just a few more months in R&D...

+ Unbelievably realistic graphics that shift at a implausibly rapid rate – no sign of detail being sacrificed to prevent slow-down crapping everything up (although we've yet to put the multi-player game through its paces).
- Essentially a visually enhanced *GT2* at its heart, so it may not satisfy those after an easy arcade drive.

SOUND SOLUTIONS

The engine noises for each car have been individually re-recorded to take advantage of PS2's digital abilities. With surround sound you'll be able to hear *all* of the cars behind you as opposed to only one in the original games.

EXHAUST TUNES: You'll hear the roar of [illegible]



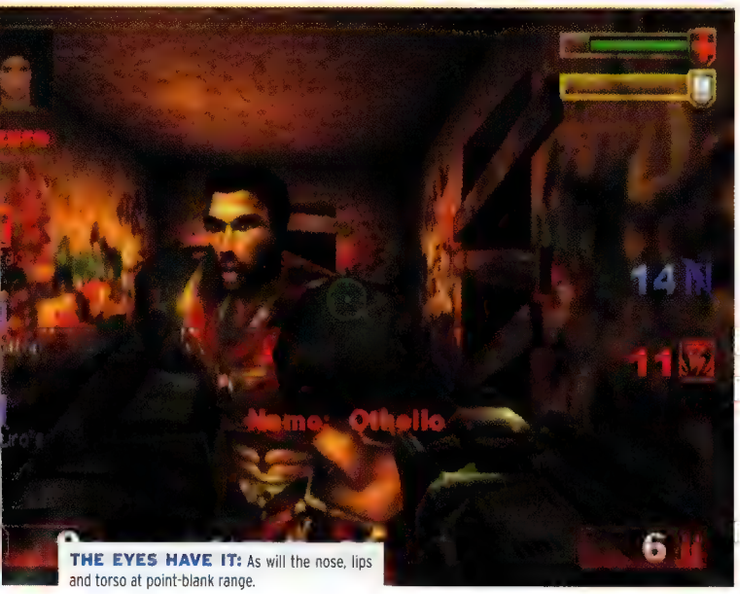
INSIDER WHEELING: Dart off the racing line if your car's armed with aggressive acceleration.

STORM THE FORT
In Assault mode you join forces with a team of 'bots and attack a heavily armed structure against the clock. Then defend the base as another team of 'bots try to beat your time.
04:33
108

EXPECTED UK FEBRUARY 2001

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

Will all futuristic gameshows be an excuse for limb-rendering carnage? Who cares. We only want to know if it's better than the PC version...



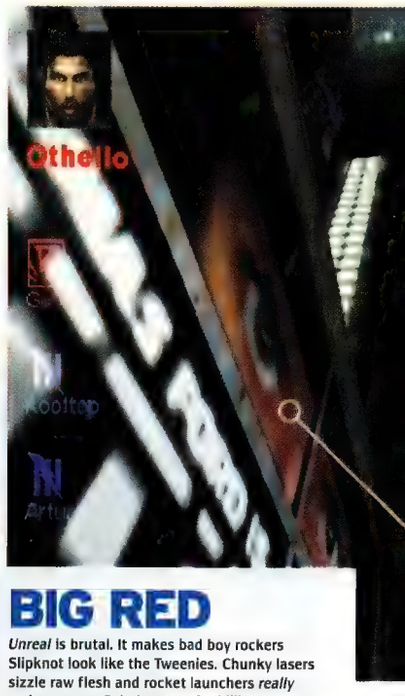
THE EYES HAVE IT: As will the nose, lips and torso at point-blank range.

If time was measured in units of achievement, then it feels like years since we first clapped eyes on *Unreal*. The disturbingly chuggy frame-rate has been replaced by a solid, ultra-detailed one-player jaunt. All the characters and levels from the PC original are in, including bonus characters like Skaarj Hybrid (a reptilian alien) from the subsequent update packs. The Mutators mode should be implemented soon, allowing players to tweak Deathmatch attributes. For example, the Fatboy mode makes players fat, easy targets the more they kill. Fragged players get thinner, maintaining the gameplay's balance. Superb. **PSM2**

A last minute U-turn has meant that the promised November 24th release has been scrapped. The extra months should help Infogrames perfect their 'pick up and play' vision.

INFO
- **PUBLISHER** Epic Megagames
- **DEVELOPER** Infogrames
- **GAME TYPE** First-Person Shooting
- **COMPLETE** 85 percent

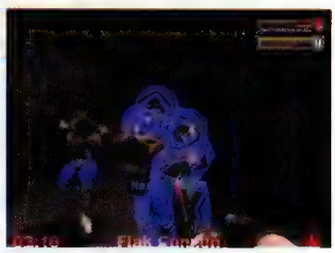
ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Eight preset control methods – fully redefinable – with adjustable horizontal and vertical movement sensitivity.
- USB mouse/keyboard compatibility.
- 11 characters, redrawn for PS2 with a skeletal animation system for improved movements.
- 10 hidden characters, plus a random select.
- 15 all-new PS2 exclusive levels split over the five game modes: Deathmatch, Assault, Domination, Capture the Flag and Mutators.
- Four skill levels – Novice to Godlike.



BIG RED

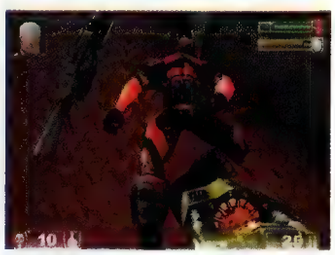
***Unreal* is brutal. It makes bad boy rockers Slipknot look like the Tweenies. Chunky lasers sizzle raw flesh and rocket launchers *really* make a mess. Gain bonuses for killing sprees, chainsaw your foes... oh, the humanity. Won't somebody think of the children?**

BULLET IN THE HEAD: Use the sniper rifle to score bonuses and decapitate foes



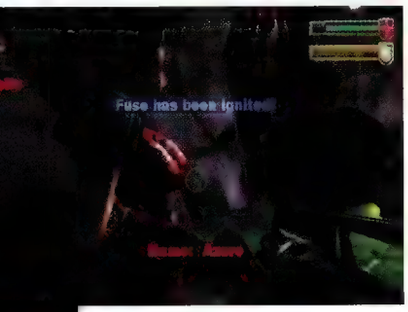
PETROL... NO LEAD: Rev it up and watch it go - the chainsaw brings combat up-close and personal.

BROWN BREAD: Dead, and you're on the receiving end. The worst part of a Deathmatch.



PLAY DEAD: Feign your death, but risk attack from trigger happy sadists.

BIG BROTHER: The environments are dark, detailed and, in places, heart-thumpingly unnerving.



BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE: Your team members warm up for an assault mission.

AMERICAN GOTHIC: Take out the disciples of Marilyn Manson with two-handed grace.

PSM2 GUT REACTION

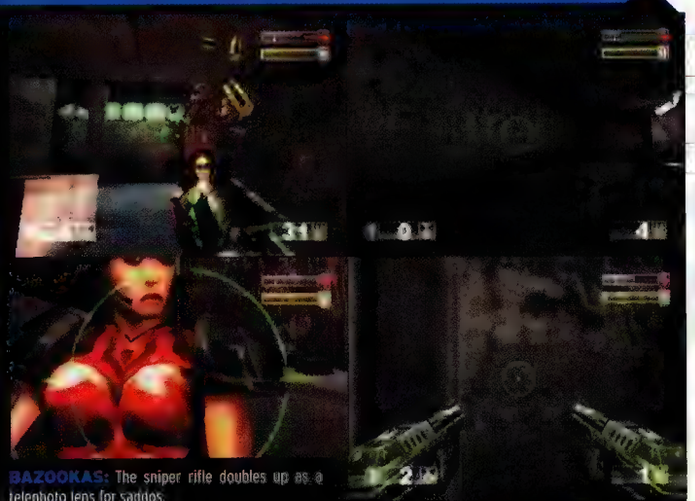
Any title that redefined the boundaries of PC multi-player gaming deserves respect. The Assault and Domination modes captured the imagination of Deathmatch weary gamers. Now that the PS2 version is spitting polygons at the speed of a £1500+ PC, we can be cautiously optimistic, but loading times are still a shade slow.

+ The Link cable lets you dispense explosive humiliation to your pals. In full-screen glory.
- Four-player split screen mode currently needs optimising. Four joypads cost enough, so who can afford the full multi-player TV and keyboard/mouse setup?

LOOPS OF FURY

Send the love, bring the friends – you'll need them. *Unreal* will let you link four PS2s in a 'daisy chain' fashion via the machine's firewire connector. Opt for single screen four-player Deathmatches or split screen 16-player hell. PS2 also supports USB compatible keyboard/mouse setups for authentic PC style controls. We've yet to try out this feature though – we will next issue.

TOURNAMENTALISTS: All your rock hard faves, framed in an arcade-style selection screen.



BAZOOKAS: The sniper rifle doubles up as a telephoto lens for saddos.

PLAS-MA BOY: Burn your foes like a Sunday morning fry-up.

ATOMIC SHITTIN': The remote controlled Redeemer is a mini nuclear bomb.

CONFRAGULATIONS: Look at your opposition's screen to steal a march on their position.

DON'T FLAG

All FPS titles *must* offer a Capture the Flag/Bag/Chicken derivative. Nothing delivers such intense co-operative action. Expect cries of "I've got your back" and the ever popular, "Leg it, doughnut punchers!". Remember, you can't score points for pinching the opposition's flag if they've already nicked yours. Ping-pong style chases ensue.

STANDARD BEARER: Blue has the flag, and red is in hot pursuit.

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

FEELING FEINT: New taunts let you pretend to be injured, or just take the piss.

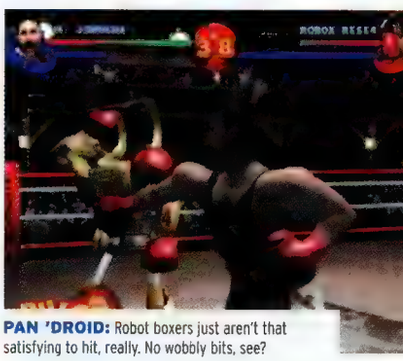
FISTS OF FURY: J. Flurry gears up for a new, improved Super-Rumble.

THE FULL FORCE OF THE SHAQ ATTACK: And his unfair reach advantage.

POUND FOR POUND

Improved hair and costume movement, as well as graphic facial injuries, help *R2R:2* to feel more like a proper scuffle. Vertex shading makes the boxer's skin appear more realistic, and the wobbling flab's something you just have to see in motion.

LARD AS NAILS: Frankly, we'd rather not see Mama Tua 'Rumble', if that's OK.



PAN 'DROID: Robot boxers just aren't that satisfying to hit, really. No wobbly bits, see?

EXPECTED UK LAUNCH JAPAN EARLY 2001

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2

Boxing's clown Princes and Princesses step back into the arena for some rum punches.

Improved Rumbles and extra characters? Yep. Revamped Training mode and improved bruising? Certainly. For us, though, the appeal of *Rumble 2* lies in simpler things. The shrieking noises of Jet 'Iron' Chin, for instance, or Wild Stubby Corley's patronising 'John Wayne' move. And, above all, the fantastic spectacle of watching two fat blokes slap each other, flesh rippling with every blow.

On top of that, though, *Rumble's* actually tremendous fun to play. The original was a bit limited and far too easy in one-player mode, but Midway have improved the AI for the sequel, as well as improving countering and allowing three different levels of Rumble for advanced pummelling. Despite the comedy, it's also surprisingly faithful to actual boxing – taunt an opponent, sway back so they over-reach, then lamp them. **PSM2**

We love it at the moment, but will we go off it by its launch release?

INFO

- DEVELOPER Midway
- PUBLISHER Midway
- GAME TYPE Boxing
- COMPLETE 85 percent

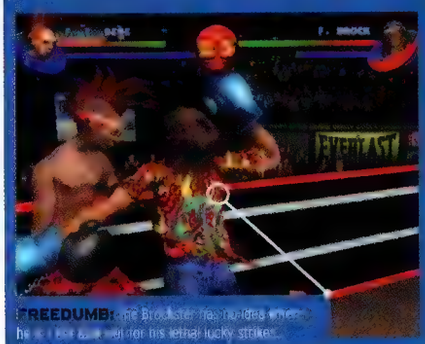
ANTICIPATED FEATURES

- 18 boxers
- Three between-round girls, four cornermen, four photographers and a trainer.
- New training regime, including sub-games based on weightlifting, aerobics, skipping, stair climbing, as well as heavy, sway and speed bags.
- Championship mode based around matches between old rivalries and arch-enemies, as well as a more straight Arcade mode.
- Three levels of Rumble power for better knockouts.

CHECK ME OUT

Rumble 2 has seven new characters, from doped-up hippy Freedom Brock to the clearly insane Canadian punk Freak E. Deke. Michael Jackson divides us, however. Some people like nothing better beating him senseless, but others can't stop shimmying around the ring and shouting 'Woo-hoo!' a lot.

BROTHER BEYOND: Afro and GC engage in a dance-off – with not a hair out of place.



FREEDUMB: The Brooklyster has dreadlocks when he's not wearing one for his lethal lucky strikes.

BLOOD ON THE DANCEFLOOR: Doing the Moonwalk moments as a big dig would've done.

THAT'LL NEED RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY: Jacko – battered but unbowed.

MC GRAMMER: That's a big-money licensing deal... through sheer lung power.

I MUST BREEAAK YOU

All of the fighters have improved entrances and taunts, accompanied by the relentlessly shouty voice of Michael Buffer. The flashy lighting and smoke effects around the ring have been improved, and while the crowd effects aren't anything to shout about, there are seven different arenas to fight in.

A FISTFUL OF MOLARS: Of course, taunts boost your Rumble bar, but leave you vulnerable.

MY BLOODY VALENTINE: Lulu Valentine – more attractive this time, and much harder.

CHIN THE RED CORNER: Jet's the martial artist, with nippy backfists and "*Waaatah!*" noises.

CONSCIOUSNESS OBJECTOR: Watching the count in first-person makes you feel a bit woozy.

PSM2 GUT REACTION

If *Tekken Tag* is a Bruce Lee flick, then *Rumble 2* is pure Jackie Chan – plenty of limb-flailing and occasional moments of inspired slapstick humour. Compared to the other launch fighters, it's probably got the least depth in terms of special moves, but learning to duck and weave is a skill all in itself – and a good boxer will usually beat an average one. Not hugely ground-breaking, but a solid, playable game, high on that all-important post-pub-appeal rating.

+ Nice physics on the lardy boxers. Comedy touches that are actually funny.
- Its long-term appeal's in doubt, especially in the one-player mode. We'll let you know next issue.

DIGGING DEEP!

The story is an intriguing one. You're cast in the role of Parker, a miner of the Mars-based extraction company Ultor. It might be the future but worker-management relations are at a crisis with terrible living conditions provoking strikes and riots. Unfortunately, your best mate Hendrix sparks trouble and before you know it, you're taking on the giant company almost single-handed. The fight quickly spreads across Mars – on transport space ships, in mine shafts and the sinister head offices of Ultor themselves. It's up to you to alert the world to the miners' fate...

BAD SEED: Hendrix may be your best mate, but it's him that lands you in hot water.

BLUSH RESPONSE: The story is told using in-game cut-scenes, but not pre-rendered stuff.

ENEMY ACTION! The brutal security police are more highly-trained than the average FPS muppet.

DEFORMATION FLYING

How often have you loosed off the biggest gun in a game only to miss your enemy and find that the scenery behind is amazingly unaffected? Big guns should make big holes, right? That's exactly what Volition believe, and to that end *Red Faction* contains what they're calling Geometry Modification technology – this means that everything that you see in the level can be blown up with the weapons at your disposal, actually changing the structure of the level as you play it.

C'EST UNE PIPE: Imagine a bad guy standing on this pipe – you could hit him with a Sniper Rifle...

CECI N'EST PAS UNE PIPE: ...or blow the pipe from underneath him. Messily effective.

EXPECTED UK SPRING 2001

RED FACTION

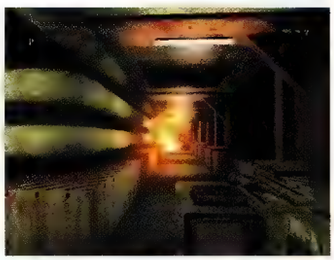
The best game about miners since Willy went manic. PSM2 brings you the first PS2 screens from Volition's promising, intelligent first-person shooter...

Mining is a rubbish job at the best of times. When you're working in a press gang, threatened with a mysterious plague and brutalised by your cold-hearted, and well-armed, employers, on Mars, it gets a whole lot worse.

That's the premise for veteran PC developers Volition's new first-person shoot-em-up, and although they're pretty new to the console side of gaming – they're also working on the much-anticipated *Summoner* for PS2 – it's already looking ace.

Most PC gamers point to *Half Life* as the game that re-invented the first-person game as a dynamic story-driven beast and Volition have taken more than a few leaves out of its book. If the playability and control with a DualShock 2 – rather than the traditional PC mouse and keyboard – matches that of the N64's *GoldenEye/Perfect Dark*, then it won't just be Unreal Tournament and *TimeSplitters* blowing huge first-person bullet holes in the PS2. **PSM2**

Look out for Red Faction *mid-way through next year.*



FIRE IN THE HOLE: *Red Faction* benefits from a variety of strong combat environments.

INFO

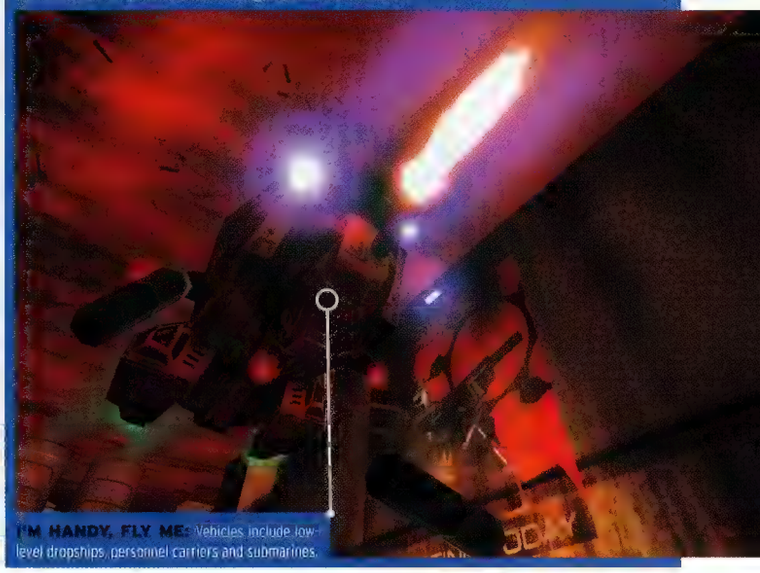
- **DEVELOPER** Volition
- **PUBLISHER** THQ
- **GAME TYPE** First-person shooting
- **COMPLETE** 40 percent

ANTICIPATED FEATURES

- Fully deformable scenery – shoot it, it breaks
- Strong story-based level construction
- Lots and lots of big guns
- Controllable vehicles
- Great Sniper Rifle mode

METAL MICKEY

Later on in the game you'll get to fight boss characters, giant vehicles (which you can also commandeer for yourself) and even giant mech-like robots.



I'M HANDY, FLY ME: Vehicles include low-level dropships, personnel carriers and submarines.

CROWD TROUBLE: These troops are tough - mass confrontation doesn't look like a good idea.

FRIENDLY FIRE

Although no screenshots have been released of it yet, Volition intend to include a two-player, split screen multi-player mode. A four-player mode is a possibility, but due to the level of detail in the game Volition won't commit to it being included in the final release. Game options will include straight Deathmatch as well as some other, mysterious 'extra options'. 'Capture the Flag', anyone?.

DAMN AND BLAST: PS2's lighting effects give firefights an edge of realism.

WELL RED: It's Mars y'see, so Volition can go mad with the other-worldly colour palette.

WEAPON AND ON...

- You'll be able to select your weapon from a total of 15 available in the finished game, all modelled on realistic existing firearms. So far, PSM2 has only seen and fired five of these: a sniper rifle, an assault rifle, a handgun, a rocket launcher and a remote detonating weapon. Only the bigger weapons will actually cause the game's scenery to deform.

PISTOL ARTIST: Basing weapons on existing firearms is one thing... but G-Cons?

SNIPER'S HILL

One of the pleasures of the modern shooter is the clinical head shot, lugged into an opponent from a minimum of 100 yards away. The Sniper Rifle already unveiled in *Red Faction* looks to be a peach, guaranteeing cold-blooded laughs for all.

HEADS UP: He can't see you, but he's well in the sights of your high-powered rifle...

KATHUNK. GURGLE... Now your enemy has extra cranial ventilation applied.

IN THE STUDIO

- PRODUCER: Rob Loftus
- LEAD DESIGNER: Alan Lawrence
- ARTIST/ ANIMATOR: Tim Borrelli
- WRITER: Mike Breuil

TEAM HISTORY

Formed in 1996, Volition are based 130 miles of Chicago. They are also working on the hotly anticipated PS2 RPG *Summoner* (see last issue) but *Red Faction*'s team are best known for the award-winning *Freespace* series on PC.

FOR MORE INFO

www.redfaction.com

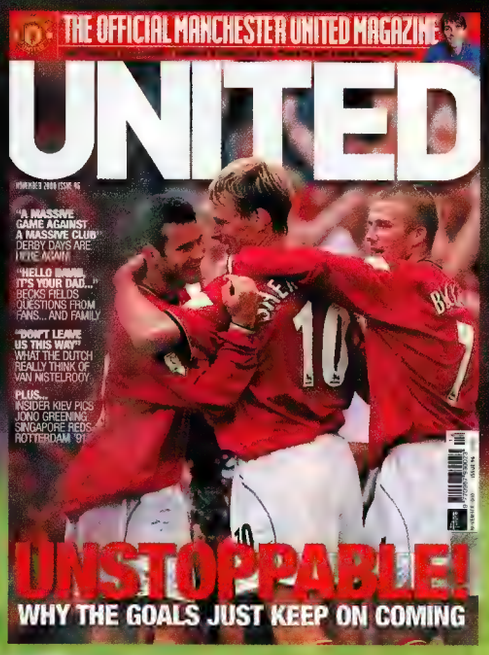
PSM2 GUT REACTION

Red Faction looks superb and could well turn out to be one of PS2's best first-person shooters. The deformable scenery is loads of fun and allows the sort of freedom that's often missing from this type of game. We're worried about how *Red Faction* can be balanced in the face of such freedom – and we don't believe the release date for a minute – but we're still very excited...

+ Great story, loads of freedom, big guns.
First of its kind – will it really work?

There are many things that make United an unstoppable force...

...find out what the rest are in this month's issue.


THE OFFICIAL MANCHESTER UNITED MAGAZINE
UNITED
"A MASSIVE GAME AGAINST A MASSIVE CLUB" DERBY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN!
"HELLO DAVID, IT'S YOUR DAD..." BECKS FIELDS QUESTIONS FROM FANS... AND FAMILY
"DON'T LEAVE US THIS WAY" WHAT THE DUTCH REALLY THINK OF VAN NISTELROOY
PLUS... INSIDER KIEV PICS JONO GREENING SINGAPORE REDS ROTTERDAM '97
UNSTOPPABLE!
WHY THE GOALS JUST KEEP ON COMING

ON SALE 24 OCTOBER

WET DREAMS: They're water sprites, but they can't swim, so they dream about it.

EXPECTED UK LAUNCH

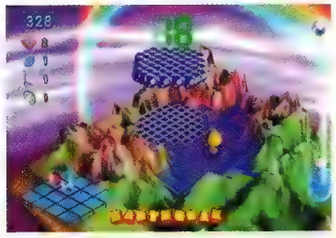
AQUAAQUA

The PSone's fiddly, but engaging, unsung puzzler is back, and it's wetter than ever. No, really... it's got sprites to prove it.

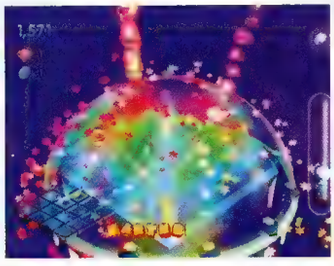
Pitched in blitzkrieg-style Hollywood marketing speak, *Wetrix* and sequel *AquaAqua* would almost certainly be described as being "like *Tetris* – but with water". Except that it isn't.

The idea, for reasons to do with the impending death of cute water sprites, is that water falls onto a floating square of land, and you have to stop it from dribbling off. You build reservoirs to store it in, evaporate it with meteors and frantically try to stop bombs from destroying your industrious damming. Which, to begin with, is as freakishly complicated as it sounds, but quickly becomes fun. In a compulsively hallucinogenic sort of way.

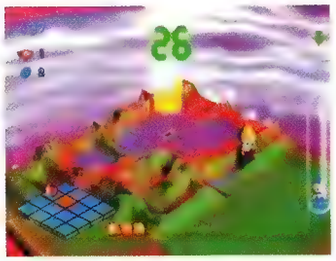
AquaAqua should be released at the bargain price of 25 quid, making it a worthy competitor to the equally addictive Fantavision. **PSM2**



CHASING RAINBOWS: Store enough water, and you'll be treated to this lovely effect.



BROOK, SHIELDS: Getting enough points prevents the destruction of your little streams.



OUT OF SPRITE: Use unwanted comets to set the little blighters on fire, if you're feeling sadistic.

AQUAAQUA

INFO
- DEVELOPER: Zed Two
- PUBLISHER: SCi
- GAME TYPE: Puzzling
- COMPLETE: 90 Percent

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Two-player Versus mode
- Four stages based on planetary evolution – the Paleozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic Eras. Ancient Civilisation
- Bonus Future level

PSM2 GUT REACTION

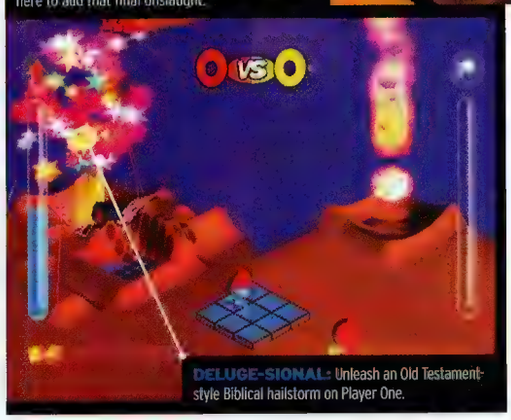
After an initial period of shouting at the screen, it's remarkably easy to slide into that Zen-like state associated with the best puzzlers while playing *AquaAqua*. The isometric perspective's irritating – it isn't always clear how much time you've got to position the next block, and it can be impossible to spot a leak in time – but the graphical attention to detail almost makes up for that. It isn't as pretty as *Fantavision* and it's nowhere near as relaxing, but *AquaAqua* looks like being ideal for the hyperactive child in all of us...

+ The PS2 needs a puzzle game.
- Currently suffers from some maddening flaws.

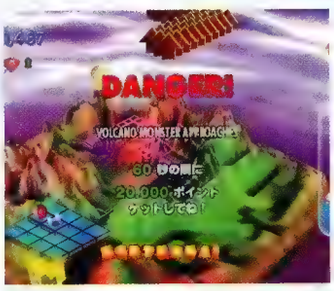
DRENCH YOUR MATE

With any two-player puzzle game, the fun lies in dropping nasty stuff on your opponent, then laughing as they struggle to cope. Doing this in *AquaAqua* involves playing a variant of noughts and crosses – evaporate three bits of water in a line, and a deluge of water engulfs the other player. It's a bit complicated, and lacks the directness of, say, *Super Puzzle Fighter 2*.

NOUGHTY BUOY: Evaporate the water over here to add that final onslaught.



DELUGE-SIONAL: Unleash an Old Testament-style Biblical hailstorm on Player One.



STORM WARNING: Sometimes, the score limits you're assigned seem unduly harsh.

IF YOU WANT FLOOD...

Throughout the Story mode, your watery creations are attacked by big monsters with improbable names. It isn't entirely clear why, but you'll be warned of their approach and given 60 seconds to acquire a set number of points. Get them, and the Aloof Galatial Dragon (or whoever) will be stopped by a shimmering shield. Fail, and he'll run rampant, smashing walls down and letting the precious water flow free. This frequently reduces play to slamming blocks down as fast as possible, although you'll then cause a far more destructive and game-ending earthquake.

HEAVY WATER: The bombardment often helps, by evaporating all of your lakes.

PICK UP AND PLAY?

The first thing that knocks you for six when you launch into a race is the unforgiving nature of the bike handling. *Moto GP* is a racing game where you can't lose concentration for a second – finding the correct balance between acceleration and breaking as you go into a sweeping bend or a tightly knotted chicane is crucial. Every member of the PSM2 team found themselves overshooting their first bend when they picked up the DualShock 2. It really does take some acclimatising to.

LEAN MACHINE: The way your rider subtly adjusts his balance is hugely entertaining.

EXPECTED UK DECEMBER

MOTO GP

The first two-wheel racing game to hit your PS2 certainly sets a benchmark that some will find it hard to match...

Namco seem to have come up trumps with their latest arcade racing conversion. Mind you, with a team of 40 people working on it, you'd expect the finished code to be within a whisker of hitting the mark.

The game manages to effortlessly blend both arcade and sim features without seeming an ungainly assembly of the two. Its presentation is decidedly arcade-flavoured, with easy-to-negotiate menu screens and bold, solid visuals in-game. The racing action itself is where it starts to show its sim colours though, with an accelerate-decelerate nature of racing that comes as a shock after *Ridge 5's* pure arcade powersliding. You can toggle the Sim features on or off, but it still requires a high level of concentration even with everything set to its basic level.

The fact that there are only five tracks to test your skills on may disappoint some people, but there are five further courses to unlock by completing the relevant task in the game's Challenge mode. The famous courses that you can choose to ride right at the start (including Donnington and Suzuka) will take you a great deal of time to learn and an age to master though... **PSM2**

By the time you read this, Moto GP will be spinning in Japanese gamers' PS2s. PAL code hits the UK in December. Review next issue.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Namco
- **PUBLISHER** SCEE
- **GAME TYPE** Superbike Racing
- **COMPLETE** 95 percent

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- 32 real bikes
- Five tracks (plus five secret ones)
- Five racing modes

FLYING LOW: The sense of speed really hits home when you use the Onboard camera.

HALE AND SPACE: A good example of how wide and open the landscape feels.

CYC' YOURSELF UP: Many of the bikes have very similar attributes (with many close to the max).

SLAM CASSEROLE: Hit a barrier at crazy speed and, even as a player, you'll be grimacing.

THE LITTLE THINGS...

Namco's R&D team certainly seem to have taken great pains to ensure *Moto GP* gives the player an authentic ride. Besides the handling demands the bike makes on you – even in Arcade mode you'll have to *really* slow down for many corners – there are plenty of small details that increase the realism. Muffing it all up and bumbling off the track, for instance, isn't only marked by a biting drop in your bike's speed and rumbling wrists, courtesy of your DualShock 2...

GRAVEL RASH: Scuffing through one of Suzuka's gravel traps, your treads become clogged.

TYRE WILCOX: After a second or so, the crap begins fading from your rubber. Lovely.

IN THE STUDIO

- **PROJECT CHIEF** Isao Nakamura
- **PROJECT DIRECTOR** Kazuya Maruyama
- **LEAD PROGRAMMER** Satoru Ouchi
- **SYSTEM PROGRAMMER** Takashi Matsumoto
- **LEAD GRAPHIC DESIGNER** Yohzo Sakagami
- **LEAD SOUND DESIGNER** Yoshie Takayanagi

TEAM HISTORY

All of the team worked on the original *500GP* coin-op, which *Moto GP's* based on. The team have a wealth of experience coding racing games, with members having worked on *Suzuka8hours* (Arcade), *Ace Driver* (Arcade) and *Ridge Racer* (PSone).

FOR MORE INFO

www.namco.co.jp

DUEL GAUGE: A flying start is crucial. Our money's on Player One, with their 1 km/h lead.

GOING HEAD TO HEAD

One of the great things about the arcade game was the fact that it was linkable to other units. In the PS2 version, two players can challenge each other. "If you want to race with more than two players, please go to an arcade by all means (laughs)!" Isao Nakamura, project chief on *Moto GP* recently joked to PSM2.

HORSE POWER: We always go for a bike that combines good handling with fine acceleration.

ON A BENDER: The two-player races are even more 'nip and tuck' than those in Arcade.

MICHAEL WINNER: Player Two should concentrate on the road - or is he laughing at Player One?

CORNER SHOT: The bike physics really are superb - look how low you can go...

MAKING THE GAME FIT...

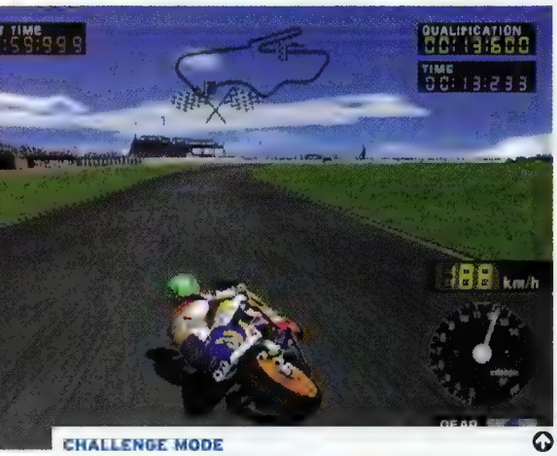
Moto GP throws a wealth of options your way, so you can tailor the game to the way you prefer to play. Handily, you can beef up your bike's attributes (adjusting its max speed, acceleration, handling and brakes), so racking up impressive Time Trial times should be a something of a breeze...

SIM, PLEA THE BEST... One of the most important decisions you'll have to make is whether to switch the Sim option on or off. Crank it up, and you'll find hitting the brakes cold sends your back tyre screeching out from under you. *Moto GP* then becomes a real driver's game, with you fighting to control the bike all the time.

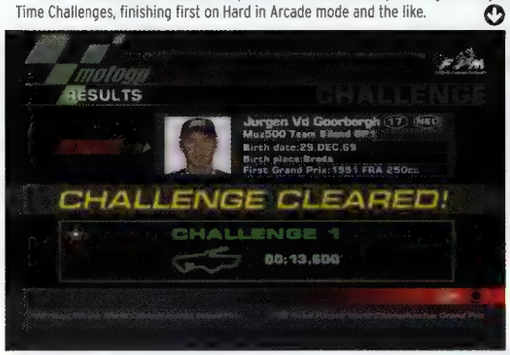
CAMERA DIAZ: As you'd expect, no... *Moto GP* has a selection of camera views from which to witness the 200 km/h action. Namco have chosen a system where, by the press of a button you can quickly toggle between two views during a race (so you don't lose position while fiddling for an alternative angle, we believe). You simply delve into the option screen and assign your two views. Some are rather off-the-wall though, such as 'Right Side', as above...

GOING IN FOR THE SKILL

As well as the two-player Versus mode highlighted earlier, there are some excellent single-player games: Arcade, Season, Time Trial and Challenge. Time Trial is dead handy for helping you to learn the winning racing line, while some of the tasks in Challenge mode really sharpen up your riding skills. For instance, several of the challenges involve a foot-to-the-floor race to a checkpoint within a set time limit. As well as making you appreciate the finer points of 100ths of a second, they award an instant failure if you stray onto the grass. You really learn to control the bike because of this.



CHALLENGE MODE
As we've said, a really addictive PS2 exclusive mode. Imagine it: 24 hidden riders, five secret tracks and 25 unlockable photos, each accessed by beating ultra-tight Time Challenges, finishing first on Hard in Arcade mode and the like.



TIME TRIAL
You can toggle with the ghost rider you race against in this compelling mode. We constantly plump for 'Best Time', which, from your second lap, sees you up against a ghost image of yourself on your quickest lap.

ARCADE/SEASON
The classic one-player games. We recommend burning round the tracks in Arcade mode until you're intimately familiar with their curves, before launching into a full-blown season where the pressure's really on.

MEN IN BACK: See the map? You're the small blob, the leader's the big one. Simple, thankfully...

TURN STYLE: Watch the other riders look back at you when you're breathing down their pipes.

WHEELIE WATHER GOOD: Floor it too quickly, and watch the nose of your bike rise...

CHEERS, THEN: The Suzuka crowd cheer you on as you approach the home straight on your first lap...

HITTING THE PAIN BARRIER

Until you get to grips with smoothly taking the corners, you'll be forever chopping the grass and skidding across the gravel traps, pummelling into the safety barriers like some sex-mental rhino. You certainly have to be *really* travelling at some speed to come off like this though...

TURN OUT: You can lean all you want, but your speed means your turning circle's too wide.

BRAKE ACCELERATE

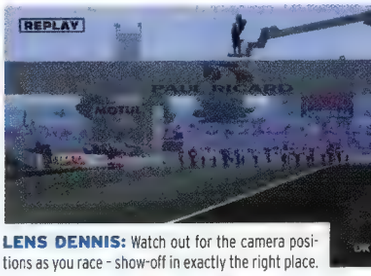
HOW TO GET IT *JUST* RIGHT...

Our tip for slick cornering success is to get used to thumbing the brake while still accelerating. This will slow you down to a controllable speed, yet still give you enough forward momentum to prevent you slipping back through the pack. The second you pick up on this technique, you'll find yourself relaxing into the game more and making dangerous overtaking manoeuvres on the corners. *Moto GP* definitely isn't a game where you ride at full revs all the time...

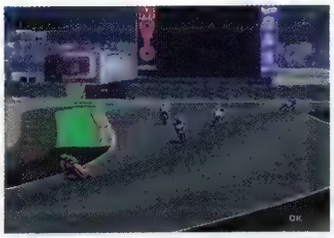
CRUNCHIE: [illegible] into the wall, you're flung into the air.

GRIN-STANT REPLAY

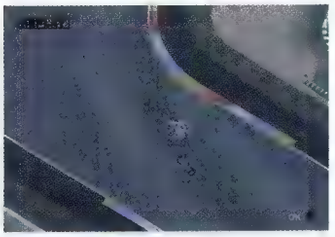
Moto GP's replay rivals *Gran Turismo*'s for sheer realism. It's like watching an actual TV broadcast of a Moto GP race, with cameras situated everywhere from the corners of the track (for those dramatic low-angle shots), to high in the sky, aboard a chopper. Occasionally they fail to pick up the moment of impact in a spectacular, career-ending crash, but that just adds to the spot-on atmosphere...



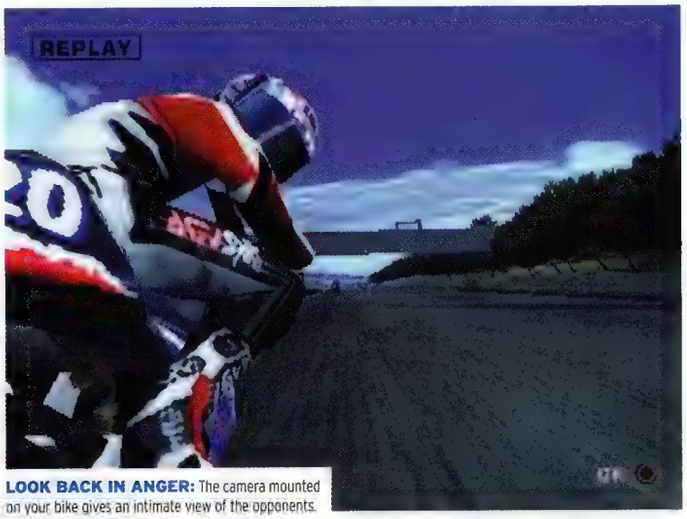
LENS DENNIS: Watch out for the camera positions as you race - show-off in exactly the right place.



WIN SCREEN: Gaze at the action on the big screen (you'll only see it properly in the replay).

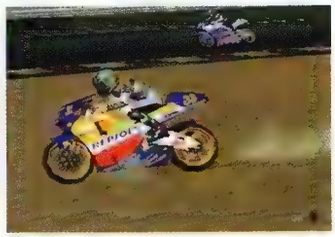


CHOPPER JOB: The wobbly helicopter cam is accompanied by the whirling sound of the blades.

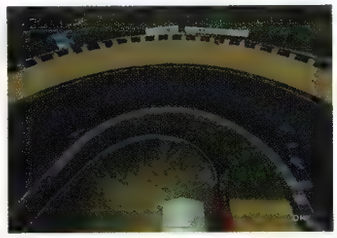


LOOK BACK IN ANGER: The camera mounted on your bike gives an intimate view of the opponents.

HOLY HIT: The bike and rider models feel so solid - just watch the bike cartwheel into the distance.



MOTOCROSS: All your mistakes are gloriously displayed in follow-you-cam.

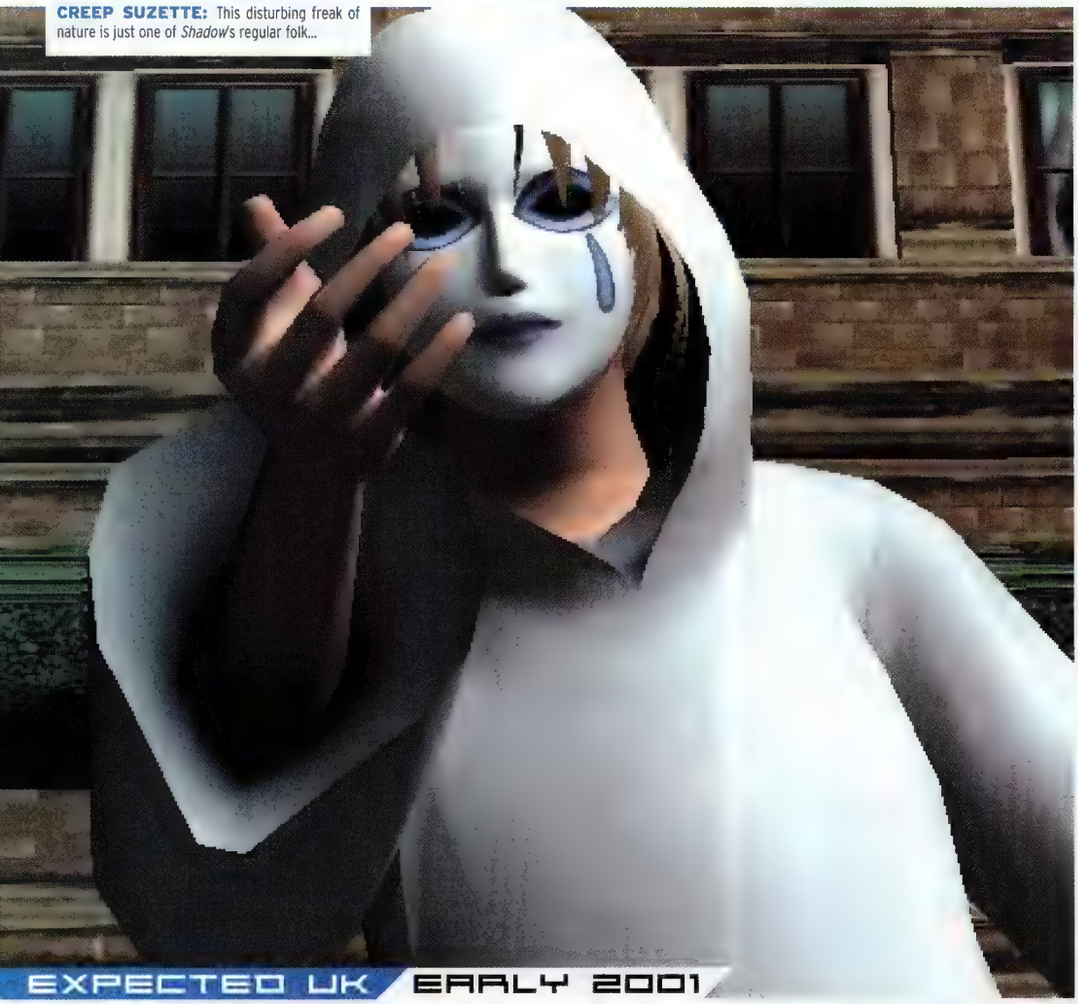


CRANE FLIES: Learn the best racing line from the crane-mounted camera.

PSM2 GUT REACTION

The near-complete *Moto GP* code we've been playing is shockingly addictive (particularly the checkpoint-style trials in Challenge mode). However, it's a racer which you really have to sit determinedly down with for an hour or so before you get to grips with the bike control. Picking up the DualShock 2 and beginning a race, without any prior experience of the game, ends in disaster for your rider. With a 50fps frame-rate, the riding action's incredibly smooth though (even if you are bruising into a barrier), and the graphics are super-crispy. Have Namco done it again?

+ A real challenge in places, with some exceptionally sharp visuals.
- Too brutal for some, unless you're prepared to sink some time into it.



CREEP SUZETTE: This disturbing freak of nature is just one of *Shadow*'s regular folk...

EXPECTED UK EARLY 2001

SHADOW OF MEMORIES

Usually, when your number's up the last thing you look forward to is the future. Not so with Konami's time travel extravaganza, from the team that terrified you with *Silent Hill*...

Plot-wise, *Shadow of Memories* lies somewhere between Sunset Boulevard and Quantum Leap. Eike Kusch, the hero of the story, is dead, but has been given an opportunity to go back in time and reverse the chain of events leading to his demise. The game begins on the day of his death, and involves Eike investigating disputes started by his ancestors.

Like *Silent Hill*, it promises to emphasise an air of brooding menace rather than *Resi*'s shock horror or *Onimusha*'s savage, scarlet-hued gore. Everything starts innocently enough, with a pleasant stroll through a Germanic village festooned with rose-filled flower beds and the odd demonic-looking dog, but it quickly becomes apparent that something is amiss, as strange cloak-wearing types start to appear and the people around you seem to be suffering from déjà vu. From initially brief hops in time to reverse his death ten minutes later, Eike starts venturing further back, hoping each time that the next leap will be... er, hang on. **PSM2**

The version we've been playing still has a fair way to go, which would tie in with an expected release date of Spring 2001.

RUBY TUESDAY: Expect a plot that plays heavily on the idea of family heirlooms and ancient secrets.

TWO BECOME ONE

Whatever you've been led to believe by Back To The Future 2, time-travel isn't all skateboarding and near-incestuous larking about. For instance, early on in *Shadow* you'll come across an alternate version of yourself from the past – a shadow of your former self, if you like. He appears to be asleep, but – no! Don't wake him up! You'll create a time paradox that could engulf you both... Actually, you're thrown into eternal limbo, and then the game gives you a sharp bollocking.

SLEEPING BEAUTY: Your past self, blissfully unaware that he'll shortly burn to death.

TIME'S UP: Good God, man. Didn't you see Timecop? This is annoying, to say the least.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** KCE Tokyo
- **PUBLISHER** Konami
- **GAME TYPE** Adventure
- **COMPLETE** 65 percent

ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Era-hopping adventure action – stop a tragedy in the past, reap the benefits in the future.
- Full character interaction – chat to anyone you can find, offer them gaudy trinkets or just pass the time of day.

SHADOW OF MEMORIES!

"IT PROMISES TO EMPHASISE AN AIR OF BROODING MENACE, RATHER THAN SHOCK HORROR"

MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS!

The action strays between trendy coffee-bars and medieval villages, where Eike quite probably gets treated as a witch. One pleasing touch is the way the colours surrounding Eike change depending on the period, from sepia tones to washed-out greys.

BRACE YOURSELF: This bloke's really rude to you. Why not kill his ancestors?

GOING GREY: Innocent, wide-eyed children are scarier than zombies. No? Watch The Sixth Sense.

HERE BE WITCHES: Dazzle the yokels with your future-technology, then get burnt at the stake.

"CAN'T YOU TAKE A TINT" Colours give you a sense of history as you travel back in time.

IT'S ABOUT TIME...

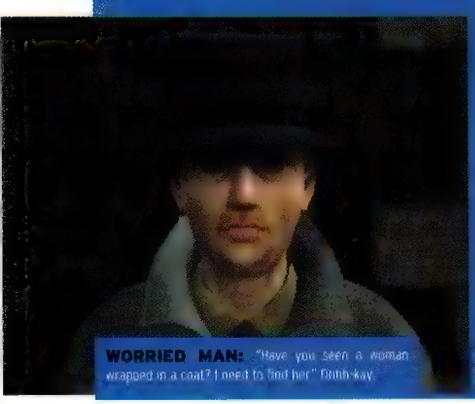
Time travel – Dr Who makes it look easy, Tharg's Future Shocks warn that it'll all end in tears. But how can you make it work for *you*? Observe...

- On a pleasant stroll, you notice a raging fire at a local bar. Families stand about weeping as all their stuff's burnt to a crisp. Good Lord.
- Somewhat stupidly, you venture inside, and are trapped by the flames.
- Luckily, you have a handy time-travel device. Cue Scooby Doo-style shimmery effect...
- Returning to a time before the fire started, you wander about chatting to people and having your movement restricted by large, ferocious black dogs.
- Spotting a shady character lurking about near the bar, you give chase, but he gives you the slip.
- He's left a burning rag behind, though. Stamp on that, then do the time-travel thing again.
- So, you're not dead, and all those nice people are back in their houses, probably with a nice cup of tea. Now all you have to do is find out who the mystery arsonist was...

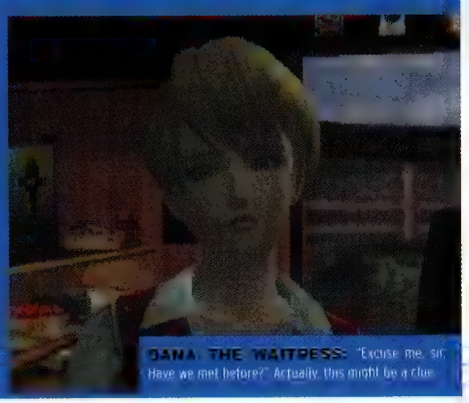
CHARACTER REFERENCES

At this stage, character interaction seems somewhat limited – walk up to someone in the street and they'll chat away as if in response to something you've said, even when it's initially unclear what. The dialogues also a bit stilted, and tends to give you a healthy shove in the direction of your next task. Here we attempt to make friends and influence people, and they shout at us.

PINK HAIRED GIRL: "What? You want a date?" Hang on love, we didn't say... "Get lost!" Right.

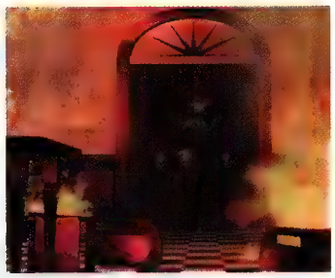


WORRIED MAN: "Have you seen a woman wrapped in a coat? I need to find her." Ohhh-kay.

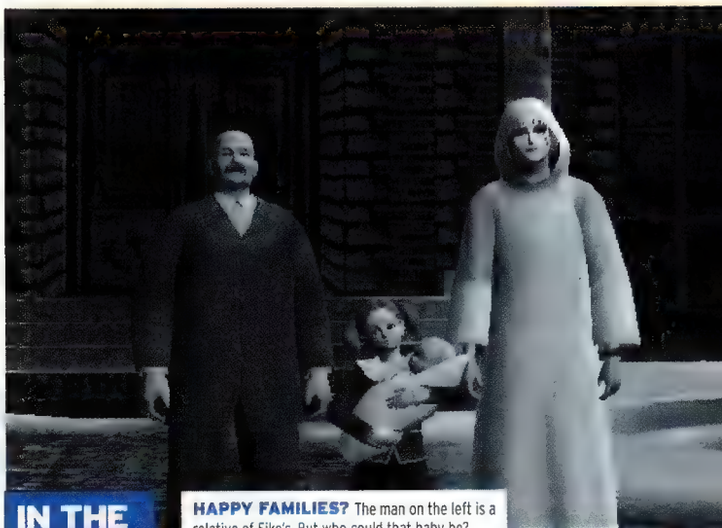


DANA, THE WAITPESS: "Excuse me, sir. Have we met before?" Actually, this might be a clue.

ALTARED IMAGES: Could all the spookiness be linked to the Masons?



15 MINUTES OF FLAME: The first of Eike's many near-death experiences.



HAPPY FAMILIES? The man on the left is a relative of Eike's. But who could that baby be?

IN THE STUDIO

DIRECTOR
Gozo Kitao

TEAM HISTORY
The man behind the lingering horror of *Silent Hill* returns, along with several members of his team.

FOR MORE INFO
www.kcetokyo.com

PSM2 GUT REACTION

While the central premise isn't brimming with originality, what we know of the plot so far is fairly intriguing – mixing medieval alchemy with Victorian-era mystery and spooky fortune tellers. However, it still isn't clear how the game will work. The latest build doesn't offer much in terms of object-based puzzle solving. Also, there's a little bit too much aimless wandering around with no clear direction for our liking, although a bit more involvement in *Shadow*'s world might help this to make sense...

+ Nice execution of a good idea, with an air of creeping dread set to rival Konami's own *Silent Hill 2*.
- Will it be involving enough to keep you on your toes?

FLY ME TO THE MOON

OK, so a certain red-hatted plumber is already famous for his feats of human cannonballism, but there's no reason why *Klonoa* can't get in on the action as well. If you find a cannon in a level, here's why you should jump straight in.

TOMMY CANNON: Just leap into the top of this freakish cartoony cannon *thing*...

KLONOA WAY: Ka-booom! Ahhhh-eeeeeeeee. The sound of a furry creature being launched into space.

LOBE-TROTTING: A bit of frantic flapping should extend Klonoa's flight range a bit.

ACTION STATION... Finally, the landing zone you've been aiming for - the roof of a passing train.

EXPECTED UK 2001

KLONOA 2: LUNATEA'S VEIL

風のクロノア2 ～世界が望んだ忘れもの～

3D Dramatic Action! It's Anamaniacs on a sugar and cheap sweets diet. Frightening...

If there was a prize for the least recognisably sequel, *Klonoa 2* would surely win. Considering that the game comes from Namco, one of the PlayStation's publishing giants, the low profile is even more surprising. The first *Klonoa* was an unsurprising 2D platformer set in a 3D world – a setup that stood *Pandemonium* in such good stead for Western audiences way back at the start of the PlayStation era. The idea behind the hybrid setup is to allow the best of 3D platform gaming – involving worlds and convincing action – while avoiding the wall-bumping, camera skipping pitfalls.

Our hero, Klonoa, is a long-eared beast of the genus *Cutsius Furrium* and the plot sees him dropped into an alien dreamworld with the mission to stop the Dark Fifth Bell from ringing and destroying the reign of peace and tranquillity. While the script clearly took the Namco R&D team half an hour and the use of a back of an envelope, the game's graphics and gameplay touches look to be pushing the PlayStation 2 as far as anything we've yet seen. **PSM2**

No hint of a release date yet, but we're betting on mid 2001.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Namco
- **PUBLISHER** Namco
- **GAME TYPE** 3D Dramatic Action
- **COMPLETE** 40 percent

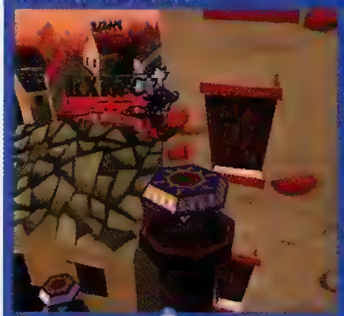
ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- New attacks for hero Klonoa.
- 24 levels all connected with in-game story-telling cut-scenes.
- 3D world, 2D gameplay – think *Pandemonium* on the PlayStation.
- Character cel-shading to give beautifully smooth animation.

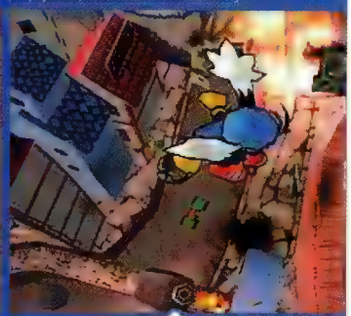
YOU'RE FOR THE HIGH JUMP!

Bounce pads aren't exactly a gameplay innovation, but this Namco are taking their presentation to a whole new level. This is the kind of production value that should make *Klonoa 2* stand out a mile from its competition.

SPRINGPIECE: There's no mistaking the comforting shape of a jump pad.

FLAP DANCER: Clever use of Klonoa's ears can help guide you towards a safe landing.





LET'S DO LAUNCH: Whoosh! In a microsecond, Klonoa has left the pad far behind

TRACK AND FEEL: The cameras zoom in for dynamic close-ups and action-tracking.

UP, UP AND AWAY

Any suspicion that Klonoa's enemy-inflation technique is little more than a gimmick is blown away by this sequence. Just look how far one hapless bad guy can take our furry hero.

BAL-LOONY TOONS: Just another encounter with a floating bad guy. Or is it?

PUNCTURED FUN: Even primary-coloured cartoon worlds bow to the basics of science.

ACE LIFT: The bad guy inflates and Klonoa is on his way to the roof.

BIT OF A SOAR ARSE? Don't balloons burst if they go too high...?

CEILING GROOVY: It looks as if we might be running out of room...

CLOUDED JUDGMENT: Through the hole in the roof and upward, into the clouds.

OVER-INFLATED OPINION: Hang on, we're going dangerously high here.

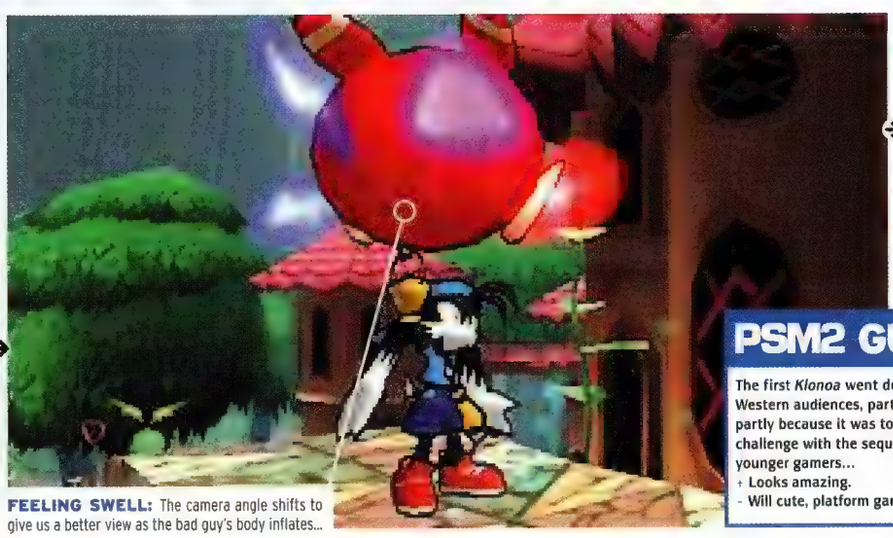
THE CAST?

At the moment, it seems Klonoa is the only playable character in the game. However there is a full cast of non-player characters to help him along the way. A trainee priestess called Lolo (above) provides clues and is Klonoa's love interest. Pooka (below) on the other hand, is Lolo's assistant and exists purely to maximise the cute fluffy animal count.

BLOW UP!

Sometimes, just seeing off an enemy isn't good enough. You need to best your foe and then use its unwilling body to aid you in your quest. Klonoa carries a ring that allows him to attach himself to handy, and floaty, objects. With balloons and ear-powered flight featuring strongly, we foresee a bucket of aerial action.

PARTY ANIMAL: A-ha! Bit of a confrontation here between our hero and... a balloon.



FEELING SWELL: The camera angle shifts to give us a better view as the bad guy's body inflates...

SPACEHOPPER: ...And Klonoa uses the inflated bad guy to reach valuable power-ups.

PSM2 GUT REACTION

The first *Klonoa* went down well in Japan but failed to score with Western audiences, partly because of its over-arching cuteness and partly because it was too easy to complete. If Namco present more of a challenge with the sequel, *Klonoa 2* could be a hit, especially with younger gamers...

+ Looks amazing.
- Will cute, platform gameplay continue to excite PS2 gamers?

COMING SOON

ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

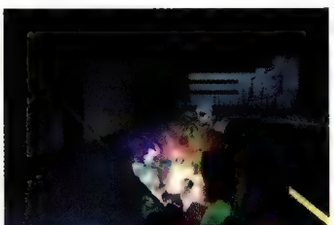
ONI MARKS... GET SET... The futuristic character designs feel nice and chunky.

EXPECTED UK APRIL 2001

ONI

One woman army Konoko deals deadly justice in a future overrun by savage gangs...

It's nothing new, but running about while smacking 14 kinds of arse out of multiple opponents is one idea that won't go away – check *Fighting Force 1 & 2*, *Gekido* and *Urban Chaos* (that *Oni* very closely resembles) on PSone. *Oni* takes the ambitious, rather than the easy-but-fun, route towards mobile warfare – kicks and slaps are supplemented by throws, sweeps and weapons to discharge.



BODYCOUNT: Konoko is made up of 1,200 polygons - three times as many as your average PSone bod.

At this early stage the levels look solid rather than gorgeous, although we were soon distracted by the control method which sees you looking and rotating with the left Analogue while moving and attacking using the right. The method's similar to *TimeSplitters* – but with *Oni* being in third-person perspective, rather than first-person, it makes the twin-stick control awkward and oddly disorientating.

The other area that needs addressing is the weapons targeting – it's without crosshairs, so actually hitting the side of a barn door, or even a uniformed gun-nut, feels like a major achievement.

Still, there's plenty of time to iron out these flaws and, encouragingly, the enemies look smart: watch them slap the pistol out of your hand and then unload it in your face! PSM2

Oni is due for release in the UK April 2001.

ONI

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Bungie Software
- **PUBLISHER** Take 2 Interactive
- **GAME TYPE** Third-person Shooting
- **COMPLETE** 60 Percent

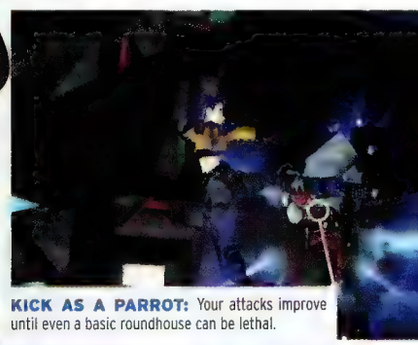
ANTICIPATED FEATURES

- 17 sprawling levels, including a 15 storey cop shop.
- Clever enemies who will retreat, re-group and gang up on you.
- Basic fighting moves that gradually become more powerful.
- Stealth as well as up-close and-painful grappling.

FOXY BOXING!

One major problem with most walk-about combat games is that they don't deliver the same variety of moves you'd get from a conventional scrapper. *Oni* gets ahead by sneaking in spinning back kicks and pelvis-punishing throws, giving you a wide range of moves with which to slam the keen, but expendable, guards against the furniture.

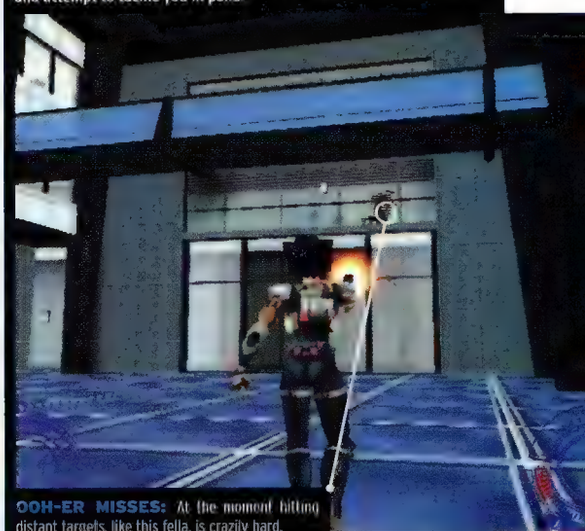
RUBBER DOLL: Spring-loaded Konoko bends over backwards to chuck this villain.



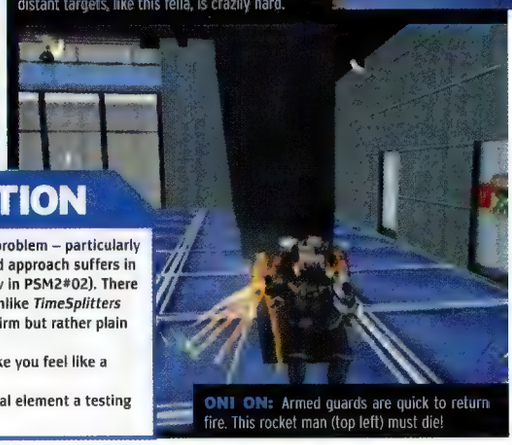
KICK AS A PARROT: Your attacks improve until even a basic roundhouse can be lethal.

SPLITTING PAIRS...

Have you always wished enemies in games were that bit sneakier? Don't wish too hard because in *Oni* guards will gun you down from a distance and attempt to tackle you in pairs.



OOH-ER MISSES: At the moment hitting distant targets, like this fella, is crazily hard.



ONI ON: Armed guards are quick to return fire. This rocket man (top left) must die!

PSM2 GUT REACTION

Controlling 3D fighting games has always been a problem – particularly in third-person perspective – and *Oni*'s two-sticked approach suffers in the same way that the poor *X Fire* does (see review in PSM2#02). There are some classy lighting and impact effects, but unlike *TimeSplitters* your eyeballs seem to be in no danger from *Oni*'s firm but rather plain textures and polygons.

+ There are certainly enough moves in here to make you feel like a kung-fu kickin' mo'fo.

- Tricky controls really make taking out the criminal element a testing strain. Might need a rethink.

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COMING SOON

ONLY IN **PSM2** - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

AMBUSH PIG: The sound of your laser fire will bring other enemies running round here.

EXPECTED UK LAUNCH

DEATH TO THE REST OF THEM!

***TimeSplitter*'s throws a synapse-frazzling array of multi-player games your way. We always find ourselves returning to soppy old Deathmatch...**

MISTER YOU: Thankfully, you're always aware of who's just shot you in the back.

TWIN CARBINE: It's always a rush to find the double weapons in a Deathmatch.

TIMESPLITTERS

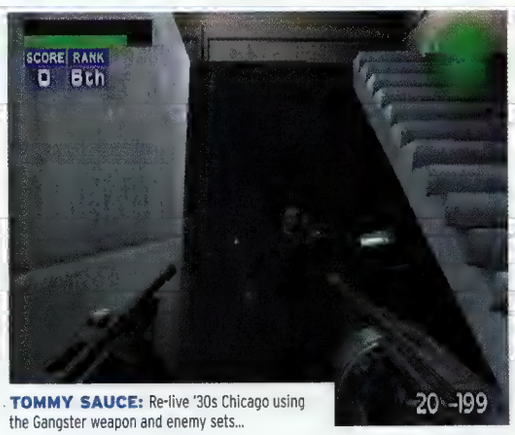
Like this month's brilliant cover game, *TimeSplitters* is one of the most eagerly awaited of PAL launch titles. But has it got the muscle to make it into your collection?

So this is it. The last time you'll see a PSM2 preview of *TimeSplitters*. After spending the past few months getting to grips with its Deathmatch options, and testing the parameters of its Level Editor, we'll be able to bring you our verdict next issue.

There's a lot riding on *TimeSplitters*' success, most notably the reputation of its development squad, Free Radical Design. It's their first title, and the gaming community is eager to see how the potential of PS2 and the FPS know-how of the ex-*GoldenEye* staffers combine.

US websites are currently going mad for the game, citing its blistering multi-player speed and pick-up-and-play nature as two reasons why it'll be The Best Thing Ever. Being British, we're going to be a bit more reserved about things – it's already very, very good, but we'll let you know just *how* good when can get a feel for the finished single-player game. **PSM2**

TimeSplitters arrives in the UK in for PS2 launch – the only first-person shooter on day one.



TOMMY SAUCE: Re-live '30s Chicago using the Gangster weapon and enemy sets...

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Free Radical Design Ltd
- **PUBLISHER** Eidos
- **GAME TYPE** First-person Shooting
- **COMPLETE** 95 percent

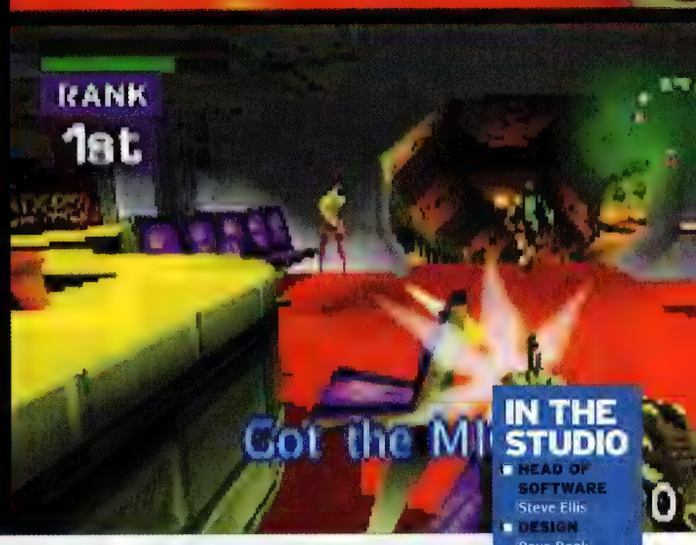
ANTICIPATED FEATURES
- Four-player split screen mode.
- Around 60 characters.
- 18 arenas
- Level Editor

FACES OF THE FUTURE

TWO OF THE BODS YOU'LL MEET AT SPACEWAYS...

Tuxedo cyborgs and delightful, but deadly, air hostesses are just two of the uglies you'll have to gun down.

BODY COUNT: You can select how many 'bots you want to be involved in your multi-player game.



I'LL TAKE YOUR BRAIN TO ANOTHER DIMENSION

As the name suggests, the gun battles in *TimeSplitters* are played out against a backdrop of exotic time travel. This has allowed the level designers to go to town with the architecture and texture detailing – some levels are rich in historic features, others show the twisted nature of the graphic artist's mind, with twisting sci-fi tubes...

BLUNDERFUL: This is one of the ten unique one-player Deathmatch arenas.

AMAZING SPACE: 'Spaceways' is a space-port level – you want to be heading here...

EYE SPY: One of the darker levels, both in lighting and atmosphere (see that poster).

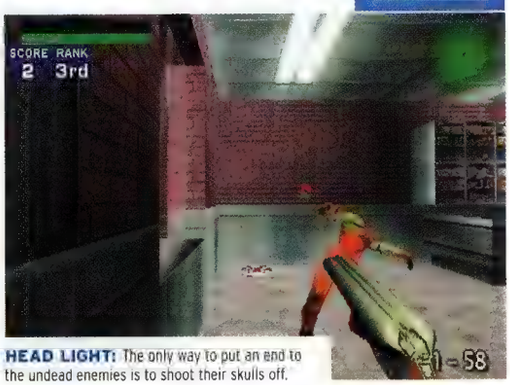
TOMB RAIDER: The Egyptian-flavoured 'Tomb' is the first level you face in Story mode.

JOY OF X: This is 'Planet X', currently waiting to be populated by enemies...

HEAD ACHE

While there's a wide variety of enemies to slaughter in *TimeSplitters*, there's an equally large number of weapons to do it with. Headshots are the quickest and cleanest, and there's a sniper rifle to sharpen your accuracy on some levels (although the auto-aim nature of the shooting certainly helps). Call us old fashioned, but we always find ourselves reaching for the double-barrelled shotgun...

NEAR DEATH: It might not be rapid firing, but up-close the double-barrel's unbeatable.



HEAD LIGHT: The only way to put an end to the undead enemies is to shoot their skulls off.

IN THE STUDIO

- **HEAD OF SOFTWARE**
  Steve Ellis
- **DESIGN**
  Dave Doak
- **ART**
  Karl Hilton
- **MUSIC**
  Graeme Norgate
- **ARTIST**
  Lee Ray
- **LEAD PROGRAMMER**
  Hasit Zala

TEAM HISTORY

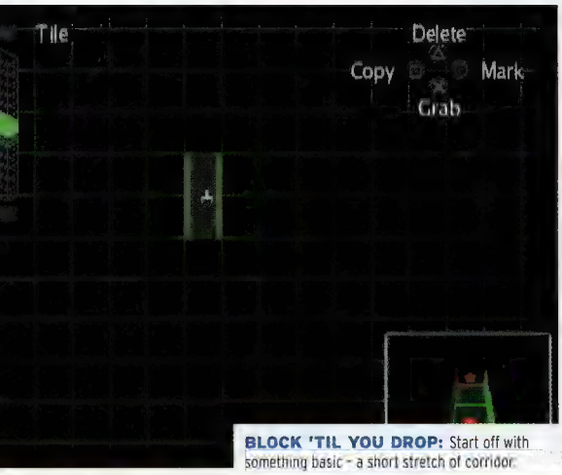
This is Free Radical Design's first game, but Ellis, Hilton and Doak were all part of the *GoldenEye* team at Rare. Final *TimeSplitters* code has just been submitted to Sony in the States...

FOR MORE INFO

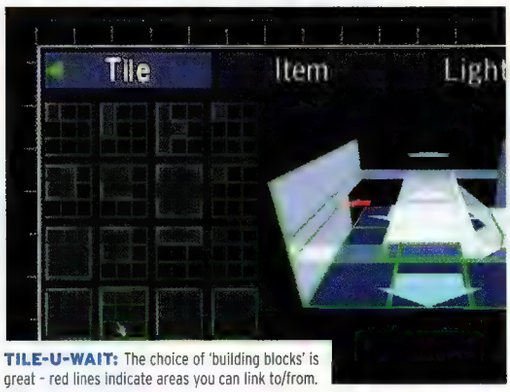
www.freeradical.com

DESIGN YOUR VERY OWN HELL...

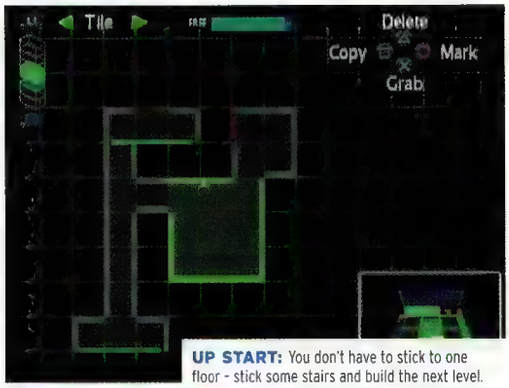
Without question, the most outstanding feature of Free Radical's game is the Level Editor. Blending inspiring user-friendliness with a supreme depth of detail means this is something you'll be spending a great deal of time with. You simply select your first tile from the menu and slap it onto your starting grid. Then pluck a length of corridor, or perhaps some stairs and slide that next to your first piece. Repeat 'til you're happy with your basic grid, then go mad with texture-maps, lighting effects and piles of guns...



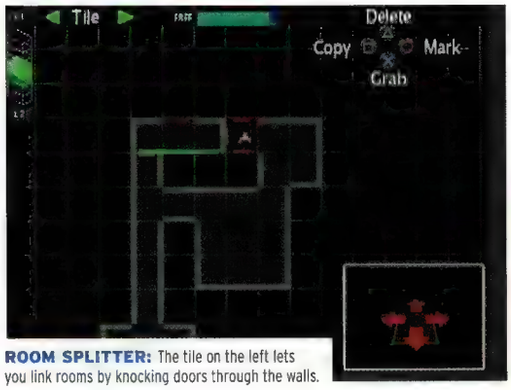
BLOCK 'TIL YOU DROP: Start off with something basic - a short stretch of corridor.



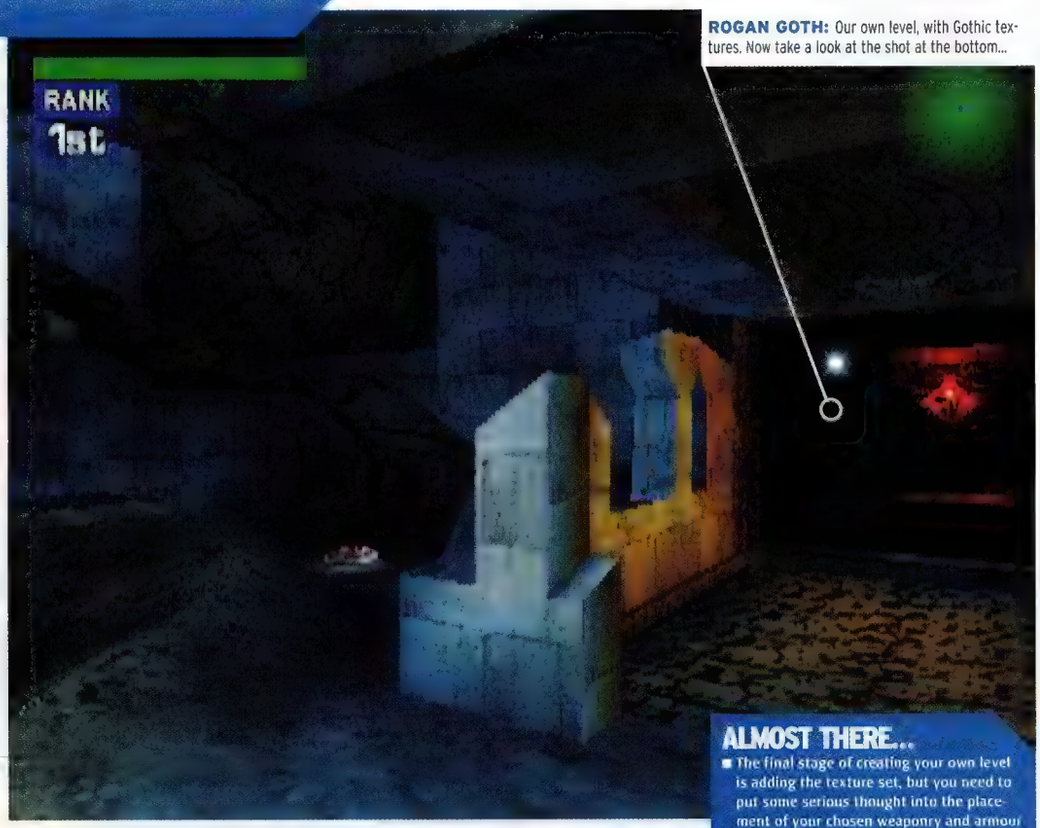
TILE-U-WAIT: The choice of 'building blocks' is great - red lines indicate areas you can link to/from.



UP START: You don't have to stick to one floor - stick some stairs and build the next level.

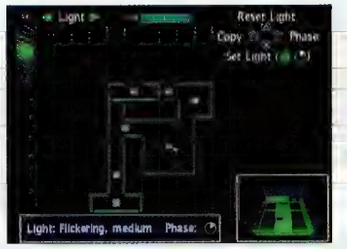


ROOM SPLITTER: The tile on the left lets you link rooms by knocking doors through the walls.



ROGAN GOTH: Our own level, with Gothic textures. Now take a look at the shot at the bottom...

LAMP SHADE: Fancy a change of mood? Select a colour for your lighting, and how you want it to act.

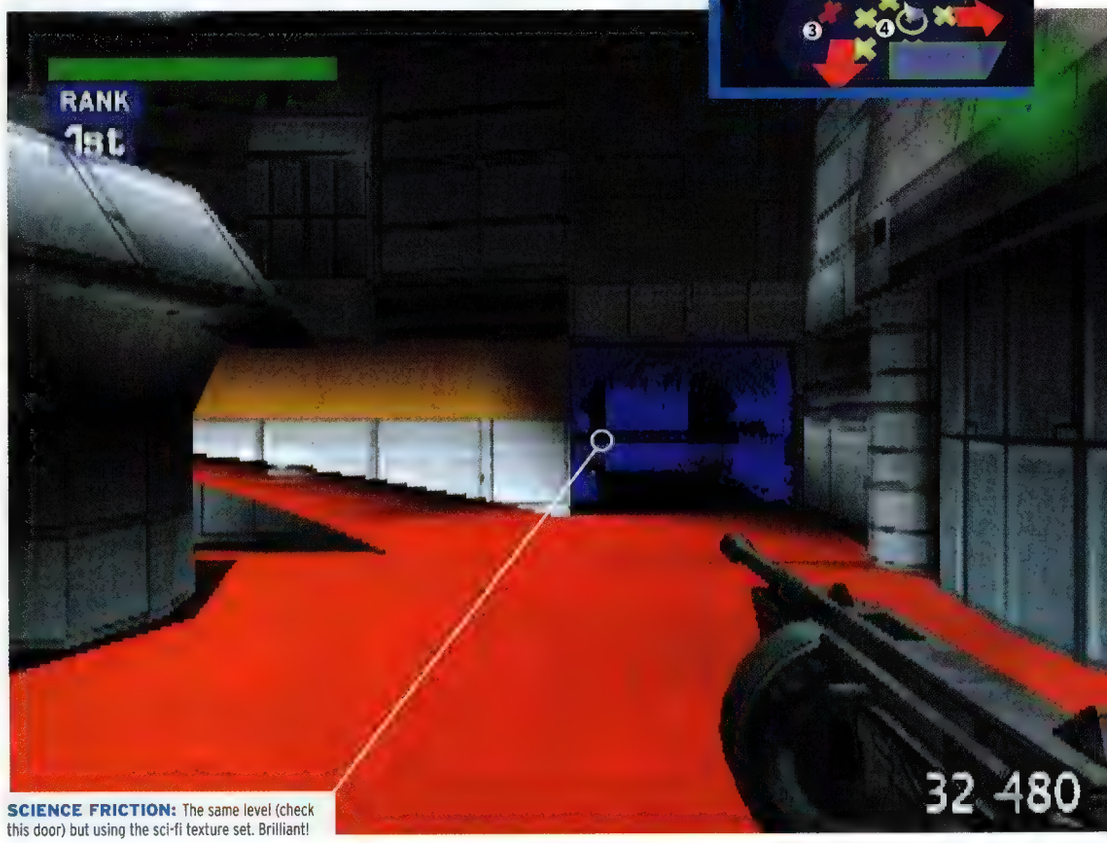


LIGHT SAUCE: We're changing the colour of the light in this room to green. And adding flicker...

ALMOST THERE...

- The final stage of creating your own level is adding the texture set, but you need to put some serious thought into the placement of your chosen weaponry and armour power-ups before you do this. Here's an example of what you can do...

1. The start point for this room.
2. Yellow crosses are where you can place items on a particular tile.
3. A red cross is a medi-pack.
4. We're just dropping some armour here...



SCIENCE FRICTION: The same level (check this door) but using the sci-fi texture set. Brilliant!

THE ENEMY MUST DIE...

Strafing through Story mode in the latest *TimeSplitters* code we've been testing, it's clear the level difficulty has yet to be balanced – at the moment it's crushingly hard. Free Radical and Eidos are working on this as we write. However, you can be sure that the enemies won't merely be queuing up to die...

CRATE EXPECTATIONS: Enemies duck in and out from behind available pieces of cover.

PANE-FUL: They're not averse to gunning you down through windows. Hit 'em first. Hard.

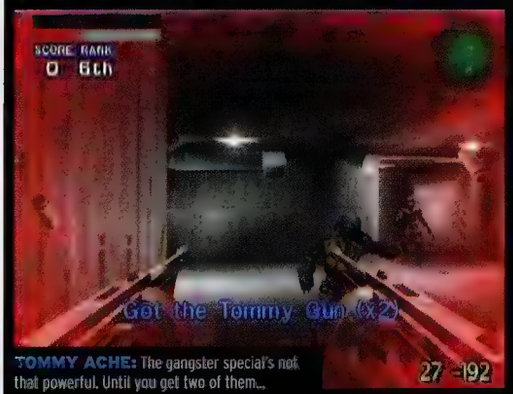
GRAB THAT BAG...

As we've mentioned in previous issues, *TimeSplitters*' take on Capture the Flag is Capture the Bag. It's an incredibly fraught game, with a bewildering amount of action at times.

BAG LADY: You can play Capture the Bag for your food, against a bunch of bots if you want.

SPITTING FIRE

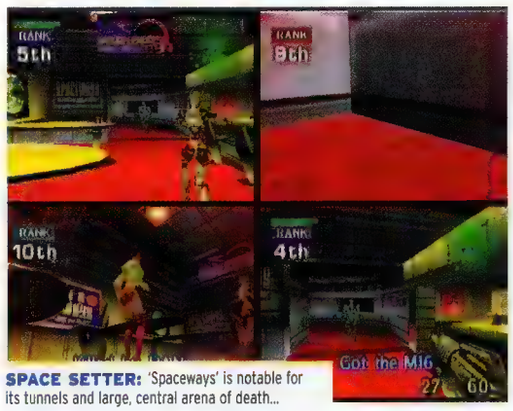
The selection of weapons on offer in *TimeSplitters* is comprehensive to say the least – because of the time-travelling nature of the game, you'll get to wield everything from dull old dynamite to the ricochet projectile-firing sci-fi handgun. Multi-player games let you take guns from different time periods to create your own custom weapon sets.



TOMMY ACHE: The gangster special's not that powerful. Until you get two of them...

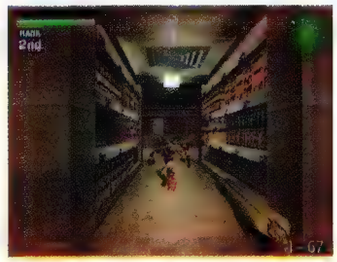
SWEET SIXTEEN: The M16 was adopted as a standard weapon by the US Army in 1967.

BUBBLE GUN: The sci-fi rifle kicks out a stream of blue floating death.



SPACE SETTER: 'Spaceways' is notable for its tunnels and large, central arena of death...

CAIROAST: In the Egyptian tombs, the sparse lighting gives plenty of shadow-lurking possibilities.



BUTCHER'S SHOP: 'The Mall' is a Deathmatch-only arena, so you can choose your enemies.

PSM2 GUT REACTION

So how's it shaping up in the final leg of its development? Well, it's the first time we've been able to experience the one-player game where nearly every element's in place. The 'toybox' aspirations of *TimeSplitters*' producer certainly look like they're being fulfilled – there's plenty of action, and lots of intelligent enemies to take out. But will the stylised 'cartoon' nature of the imagery put some of the FPS hardcore off? We'll have to see...

+ Plays hard, looks sharp and offers an unrivalled level of customisation for the player.
- We're still unsure about the balance of the single-player game – first impressions are good, but is there the longevity there?

COMING SOON

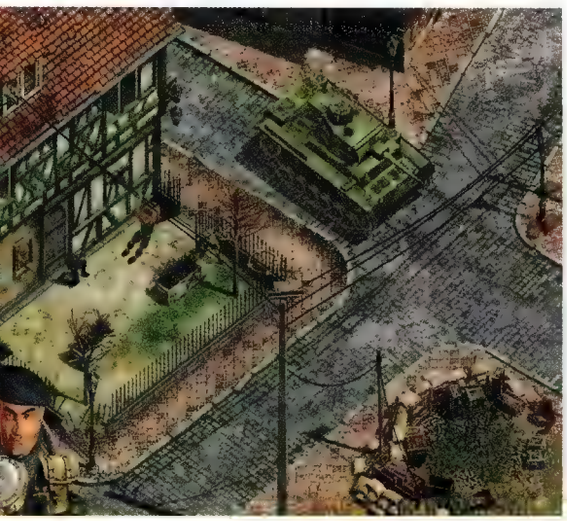
ONLY IN PSM2 - TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES FIRST!

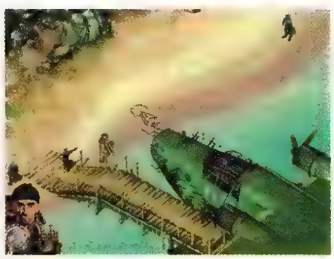
ARMOURED PHWOAR: Check the sharpness of the details on the tank in the foreground.

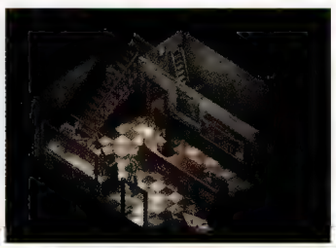
EXPECTED UK MARCH 2001

COMMANDOS 2

After last issue's tantalising glimpse, here are the very first shots taken from the PS2 version. In true Dirty Dozen style, this one's all about taking the fight behind enemy lines, snapping a few necks and getting out again, albeit in the strategic, point-and-click manner beloved of PC owners everywhere. With some superbly detailed backgrounds and some frighteningly realistic character animation (especially on the neck-snapping), this should be one sneak-and-kill title that'll look stunning on PS2.







NIGHTCRAWLER: Background tones and lighting effects give this nocturnal level real atmosphere.

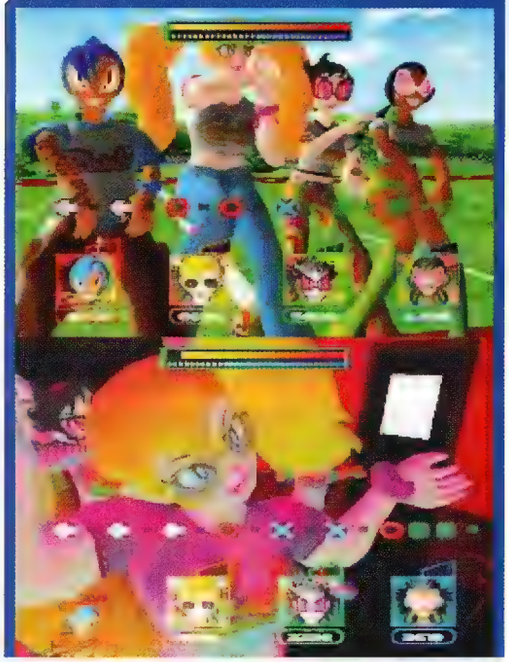
OVERLOAD!

A FRANTIC BURST OF FUTURE PS2

EXPECTED UK TBC

DANCE SUMMIT 2001

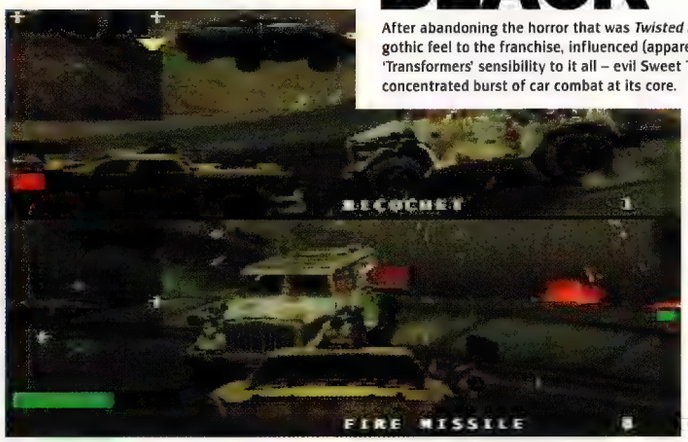
Dancing's one of those things that you shouldn't really do alone – like drinking, or scuba diving. Lucky, then, that Enix are providing a four-player mode for the sequel to *Bust-A-Move*, allowing two-on-two competition, though you'll still be able to break off into a glitzy solo at certain points.



EXPECTED UK LATE 2001

TWISTED METAL BLACK

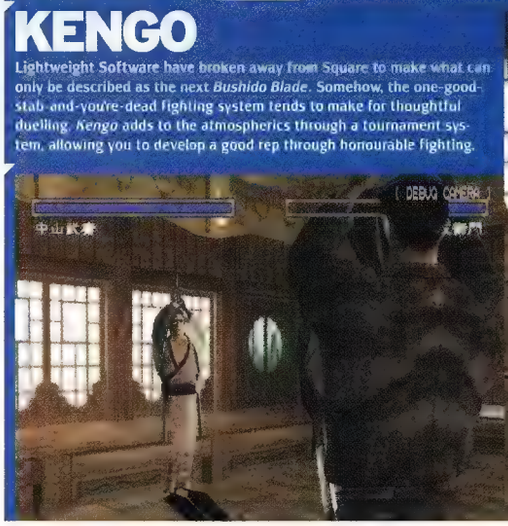
After abandoning the horror that was *Twisted Metal 3*, the original team's coming back to bring a gothic feel to the franchise, influenced (apparently) by films like Jacob's Ladder. There's a pleasant 'Transformers' sensibility to it all – evil Sweet Tooth can turn into a giant robot – but it'll still a concentrated burst of car combat at its core.

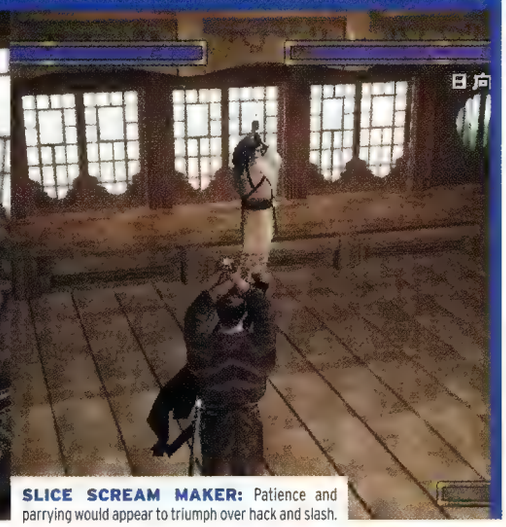


EXPECTED UK TBC

KENGO

Lightweight Software have broken away from Square to make what can only be described as the next *Bushido Blade*. Somehow, the one-good-stab-and-you're-dead fighting system tends to make for thoughtful duelling. *Kengo* adds to the atmospherics through a tournament system, allowing you to develop a good rep through honourable fighting.





SLICE SCREAM MAKER: Patience and parrying would appear to triumph over hack and slash.

EXPECTED UK EARLY 2001

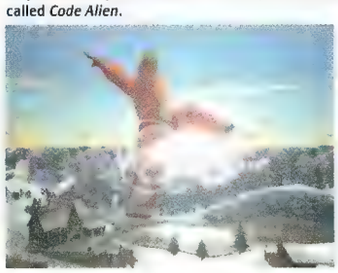
SKY ODYSSEY

It's *Pilot Wings* – but with PS2-standard realism in the weather patterns, and aircraft ranging from biplanes to stealth bombers. Chocks away...

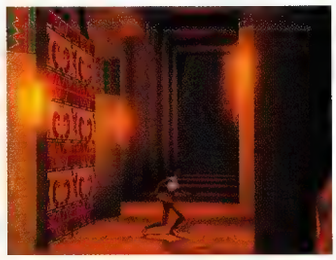
EXPECTED UK EARLY 2001

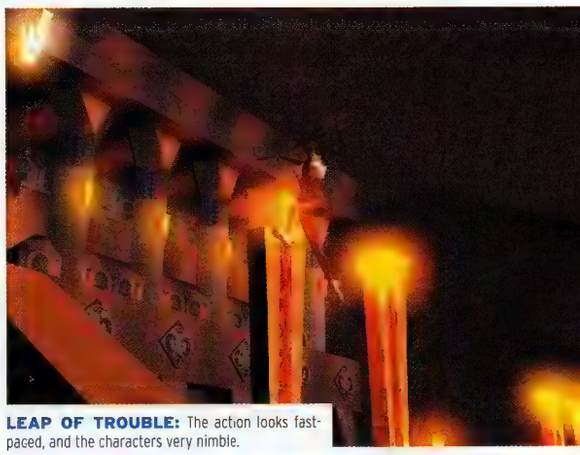
COOL BOARDERS: CODE ALIEN

Set to occupy an uneasy sort of middle ground between Konami's reasonably realistic *X-Games* and the suicidally high-flying *SSX*, the latest *Cool Boarders* is being produced by the original team, and will feature a new Board Park mode, helping to keep the emphasis firmly on the stunts. And no, we don't know why it's called *Code Alien*.



CUT SOME RUG: The shots we've seen are surprisingly colourful, for... er, tomb-based games.





LEAP OF TROUBLE: The action looks fast-paced, and the characters very nimble.

EXPECTED UK TBC

SAFFIRE

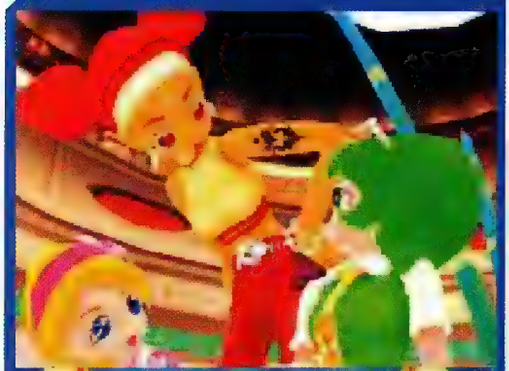
Originally slated for the N64 and known as *Young Olympians*, *Saffire*'s a third-person platformer with ambition scrawled all over it. It's set in modern times, and promises five playable characters with unique powers loosely based on Greek mythology, as well as a co-operative two-player mode. New publishers Saffire are already aiming to make this one into a franchise, which is a bit of a concern for us. Worry about the game! The *game!*

OUTSIDE, NOW: Nice detailing in the buildings, but those primary colours look a bit *Pandemonium*.

EXPECTED UK TBC

UNISON

It's a dancing game – but with a plot that comes across like Moonwalker meets Bill and Ted. In the distant future, dancing is repressed by a totalitarian regime, and the only resistance is a pirate TV show run by revolutionary dancers who, due to the whims of fashion in the 22nd century, still dance to classics like YMCA. We can't wait.

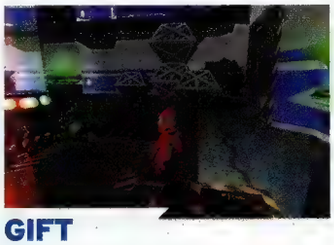


GITARU-MAN

It means...er, 'guitar man', and the game's about an elementary student who fights bad guys with a guitar. Yes.

SEVEN

Take on the seven members of legendary heroes Morumosu's Cavalry Corps, to fight cartoony ogres.



GIFT

Cryo are promising fairy-tale parodies in this odd little platformer. Think Snow White meets Carry On.

KESSEN 2

We're still waiting to play the first one in English and, yes, they're already thinking about *Kessen 3*.

GOEMON

Ported over from the N64 and looks it, despite the new hi-res visuals. Blue-haired platform-hoppers? Nah...

RHAPSODY

Or rather, *Angels Present – the Marle Kingdom Story*. Expect more music-based adventuring, this time in 3D.

ANGELIQUE TROIS

Part warfare and part dating sim. You play a princess in charge of an army, who also has to fend off suitors. Mm...

COMING NEXT ISSUE...

MORE THRILLING NEW TITLES FROM THE WORLD OF PS2

There are so many new games in development for PlayStation 2, it can be a nightmare trying to keep track of them all. Well, don't worry – let PSM2 do that for you. Next month we'll bring you all the details of Infogrames' multi-player bullet-hell that is *Unreal Tournament*... after we've played the latest build and mini-gunned each other into the unknown. Don't miss out...

PLUS:

- *Project Eden* – We bring you the first PS2 shots and latest development details.
- *DOA2* – It's dropped *Hardcore* bit, but we'll be playtesting the PAL version..
- *Gran Turismo 3* – More new shots and all the breaking news.
- *Summoner* – One of the most anticipated RPGs gets even more intriguing.

HOLD ON TIGHT,
HE'S NOW ON DVD.

AVAILABLE INDIVIDUALLY
OR IN SPECIAL EDITION BOXSET
FROM 13TH NOVEMBER

RAMBO
dvd trilogy

momentum PICTURES

18

DVD VIDEO

"D'you like what you schee?"

PREPARE FOR BLASHTT OFF!

The countdown has begun – it's less than a month until PS2 hits the UK. You need to be prepared, so over the next eight pages we bring you an essential guide to all 29 launch games. Schtaggering...

Kabal Collection/Eon/United Artists

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Is the PAL version still just a well-groomed *Tekken 3*, or does a new heart pulse under the honed and chromed exterior?

INFO

DEVELOPER
Namco

PUBLISHER
SCEE

FEATURES
39 characters.
12 game options.
Secret Bowling game.
Arcade, Vs, Time Attack, Survival, Team, Practice modes.

It's derivative of everything that came before it, it's only got one really original character and it hasn't made any spectacular gameplay innovations since the last installment. But none of that really matters. *Tekken Tag Tournament* is the purest, most well-balanced fighting game ever made.

It's easy to see why it took such heavy criticism in the beginning – none of the changes are glaringly obvious to the casual observer. Any hardcore gamer, though, will notice the difference as soon as they pick up a pad. The fighting seems fairer now – it's easier to interrupt a ten-string with some well-timed blocking, while moves like Lei's Drunken Backfist turn mediocre characters into great ones. Even the impacts *feel* heavier. God, after all, is in the details.

WHAT'S IN THE TAG?

As for the tag system, it's undeniably a bit of a gimmick... but isn't without its charms. Up against *DOA2*, *TTT* doesn't have much of a chance – it lacks the satisfyingly vicious double-whammies of the newer game and, frustratingly, one knockout's enough to end the bout. Still, it adds a new dimension to an already complex fighting system. *Tekken's* always been one of those rare games which offer a certain social cache for their experts, and the new possibilities on offer promise many sleepless hours trying to string partner-based combos together. Exactly *why* you're in a tag tournament is never quite clear – everyone seems to be the same age as they were in whatever installment they appeared in most recently, and the disappointingly ropey end sequences don't further the story at all. Still, if it bothers you, you can always switch off and go back to one-on-one violence.

SHOOT, SPEED, KILL, LIGHT

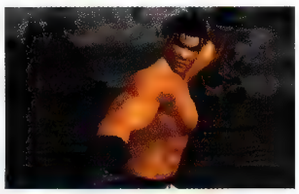
Graphically, it's difficult to appreciate the improvements at first – try going back to *Tekken 3*, though, and you're in for a surprise. Everything's intricately detailed: from the medallion around Eddy's neck to the way grass moves when someone's thrown into it. Even the backgrounds, with clouds gathering in the skies, palm trees gently swaying in the breeze and drunken onlookers cheering, are watchable to the point of putting you off your game. As for those jaggies – honestly, they were barely noticeable in the Japanese version, and nowhere near as eye-scratchingly hideous as detractors made out. They've been cleaned up slightly for the UK release, but it's only really noticeable in the pre-fight warm-up, so the effect on the game's negligible. The only problem, then, is the speed. The PAL version we're currently testing is markedly slower than the import, and it's unlikely that this will change before launch. If you've never played the Japanese version, you won't notice – it was faster than *Tekken 3*, so the slowdown just brings it back to a normal speed. While skipping between the two is enough to throw your timing off horribly, both seem equally playable, so don't worry too much.

Finally, just so you know, we've stopped playing the much-vaunted *Tekken* Bowl mode, which wasn't quite as long-lived as we were expecting. *Tekken Tag*, however, continues to be the single biggest cause of shouting, bitter rivalry and joypad abuse here at PSM2. Its claim to being the King of Iron Fist is still justified. Long may it reign.

JAGGED EDGE

This is when the new smoothness of the anti-aliased PAL *Tekken Tag* is at its most noticeable. See the difference? Try squinting a bit.

ROUGH AND TUMBLE: The NTSC version has the speed *and* untidy edges.



SMOOTH AS THE CREAM... The UK PAL *Tekken Tag* reduces speed, but is anti-aliased.

"IT'S THE PUREST, MOST WELL-BALANCED FIGHTING GAME EVER"

CHANG'S FOR THE MEMORIES: Go on, it's the ultimate *Tekken* f'gawd's sake.

JACK OFF...
IT'S GOTTA HURT
Impacts are noticeably sharper in *Tekken Tag*, and the lighting effects emphasise every bone-knackering kick beautifully. Are you sure you'll stick with *T3*?

SONY SAY

It's legendary. It's *Tekken*. It's on PS2!

PSM2 SAYS

Yes, you *could* hang onto your battered old copy of *Tekken 3*, maybe relying on the PS2 to smooth the textures and sharpen things up a bit, but do you really want to? Wouldn't you rather have the roaring, turbocharged new version, with all of those subtle little tweaks that edge it slightly closer to gaming perfection? Well, you probably would, you only have to look at *SFEX3* on pg73. But what about the fresh-faced new contender, with a swagger in its step and a nasty glint in its eye. *Tekken* barely retained its title against the Japanese version of *Dead or Alive 2*, so the rematch against the PAL *DOA2* should be the decider. Catch it next month in PSM2.

GET IT IF You have any sense at all.
DON'T GET IT IF You have fundamental problems with violence.

STREET FIGHTER EX3

Can Capcom make amends for the shoddy rush-release of the Japanese version. Or is this the last stand of a dinosaur?

INFO
DEVELOPER
Arika
PUBLISHER
Capcom
FEATURES
25 Playable Characters
Three-against-one dramatic battles.
Meteo and two-on-one super combos
Create-a-fighter mode.

Yes, it was partly Capcom's fault. They saw a market hungry for games close to the Japanese launch of PS2, decided to get in on the action, released a game with some upsettingly lazy flaws and got hacked to death by the critics. Now, they're getting a second chance, but the stakes are higher – the UK launch line-up's about 40 times better than the Japanese one, so if they mess this up, the knives are really going to come out.

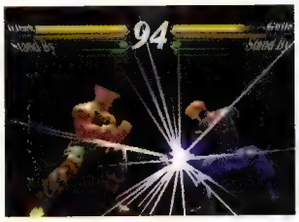
At heart, *Street Fighter EX3* is a beautiful game, and one that's recently enjoyed something of a revival in these parts. It's got the classic simplicity of *Street Fighter*, but lets the experienced player expand their repertoire with its frighteningly destructive Meteo attacks and some energy-bar destroying tag moves. The slightly cartoonish quality of *SFEX3* lets the tag system work better than any we've seen elsewhere, with bursts of real two-on-one freestyle action rather than preset team-up moves.

GRINDING TO A CULT

Then – disaster. With four characters on-screen at once, the game almost grinds to a halt. It's unforgivable anyway, but the characters are quite small, not especially detailed and fighting against largely static backgrounds, which only makes things worse. So here's the rub: Capcom have solemnly promised that the UK version will zip along at full speed, which might save them. There won't be any other graphical enhancements, which is a shame. But, we're still intrigued by the RPG-style create-a-fighter system, so an English translation offers a lot of promise.

CLAW TO THE FLOOR: It may be a new version of *SF*, but Balrog's still an arse.

BUM PUNCH: Cartoon-like animation and those static backgrounds don't help much.



METEO AND TWO VEG: The new attack's one of *SF's* few redeeming features on PS2.

HEEL MEET AGAIN: A kicking finish is greeted by a neon judgement. That's gotta sting.

SONY SAY

***SFEX3* puts you on a gaming rollercoaster without any brakes.**

PSM2 SAYS

There will always be a place in our hearts for *Street Fighter*, but we were surprised and disappointed at Capcom for trying to get away with such a shoddy effort on the Japanese version. We can only hope they'll redeem themselves here.

GET IT IF You spent your childhood feeding coin-ops with money in a bid for fighting greatness.

DON'T GET IT IF You never quite understood the whole *Street Fighter* phenomenon. You fool.

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2

DEVELOPER Midway
PUBLISHER Midway
FEATURES 18 boxers. New training regime including sub-games. Championship mode, as well as a straight Arcade mode.

Previewed on pg46 this issue, *Rumble 2* is the Muhammad Ali of boxing games – pretty, fast and a little bit cheeky. It's snappy, arcade-style, tooth-loosening fun, and while button-mashing boxing is an option, an experienced fighter will dance rings around their opponents.

DUKE-BOX: 19th Century pugilists mix it with hi-tech training dummies. One day this could happen, and who'll be laughing then?

MIDWAY SAY

Brings an all-new level of style and attitude to the ring

PSM2 SAYS

One of the few 'comedy' games that we've found consistently funny, *Rumble 2* is a fine alternative to the po-faced slappery of the other launch fighters.

GET IT IF You find something oddly compelling about watching grossly obese people hit each other.

DON'T GET IT IF You want to avoid spending weeks yelling "Yo' better put yo' money on me!" at your mates.

RING OF POP: You have to admire Jacko's sense of humour... did he believe people would want to play *as* him?

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

GEE-GEE, BABY: One of the game's highlights is stealing a horse from under an enemy's backside, then mowing down his troops on it.

I AM THE MOB: Character action doesn't slow, even with this amount of bodies in the fray. The AI's impressive too.

DEVELOPER Koei
PUBLISHER Midas
FEATURES 20 playable characters. Five stages in Musou mode, eight in Free mode. Semi-factual plot.

Last issue, we pronounced the Japanese version of this to be tremendous, spear-waving fun, with over 30 characters on the screen at once and unique leading-from-the-front tactical action. The minor irritations – mainly the fogging – are likely to still be there, but an ability to understand the intricacies of the plot and strategic elements should bump the score up a bit.

KOEI SAY

Action, strategy, historical Chinese battles on a vast scale.

PSM2 SAYS

We like this a lot, although it's got some unfortunate shortcomings that hold it back from being a must-buy. Still, it's a promising indication of what the PS2's capable of.

GET IT IF You want a gloriously OTT sword-swinger with brains.

DON'T GET IT IF You want historical accuracy – we don't think many Ming Dynasty generals could fight like this.

RIDGE RACER 5

The arcade's slick-funster gets an overhaul and new trim in all the right places. But, what happened to the racing revolution?

Namco's first PS2 racer is undeniably fun. For arcade thrills, it's difficult to beat – the exhilaration of tearing past the competition is there, the speed's OK, the handling's fine... if slightly too forgiving. So, is it set to define the new machine in the same way its ancestors did with the PSone? No.

INFO

- **DEVELOPER**
  Namco
- **PUBLISHER**
  SCEE
- **FEATURES**
  36 cars.
  14 tracks, including the mirrored ones.
  Analogue acceleration.
  Misty two-player split screen mode.

The thing is, some PS2 racers – notably Kazunori Yamauchi's *Gran Turismo 3* – are set to change the whole feeling of racing. Others, most of them just over the page, promise huge, realistic cityscapes to meander around. *Ridge 5* has seven tracks – most of them using the same sections – and some slightly tarted up graphics.

It's full of little imperfections, too. Considering that it's an arcade racer, the menus are horribly intrusive – if you want to change cars, be ready to plough through all manner of options. The Versus mode only lets you race against six computer cars, which seems a bit tight. There aren't any ghost cars to spice up the Time Attack mode, and the voice-over DJ's as monotonously perky as ever. The reflections, elaborate backgrounds and sun glare are very nice, but no thought's gone into providing anything startlingly original.

SAME AS IT EVER WAS...

As far as the UK version goes, there's nothing new on offer. The front end and racing look exactly the same. The shocking fogging that plagued the two-player version is still there, reducing what should be bitter duels to a squinting mess. The dreaded jagged edges remain all too apparent (unlike *Tekken*), your own car never moves around enough to disguise it, and it isn't too easy on the eye. In terms of speed, the PAL version we're currently playing has been optimised so that it moves just *slightly* faster than the Japanese release, but it makes no difference to the game's overall feel. Also, part of the reason the game's so nippy is that Namco have added wafer-thin borders to the top and bottom of the screen. You won't notice them until someone points them out, after which they'll be all you look at. None of this is exactly surprising, but it's still a disappointment.

"AS FAR AS THE UK VERSION GOES, THERE'S NOTHING NEW ON OFFER"

TRACK TO THE OLD SKOOL: *RR5* looks good, but it won't surprise you.

SONY SAY

No holds-barred, fast, unrestricted action.

PSM2 SAYS

The Japanese version didn't brutally shatter our expectations in the same way that some games did, but it certainly doesn't grab you by the lapels and yell 'next-generation' at you. If you've been here before then you've probably already got an earlier installment of *Ridge* that you can hold on to until something better turns up.

GET IT IF You can't wait for some arcade racing action.

DON'T GET IT IF You can hold on for *GT3*, or you want something a bit more challenging than doing hundreds of laps around the same few tracks.

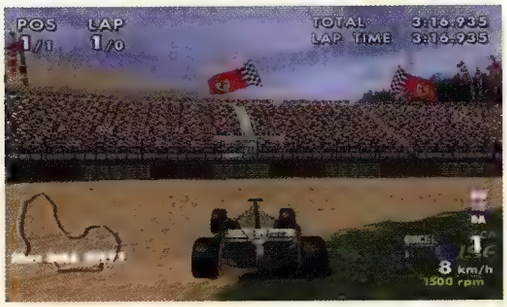
F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000

DEVELOPER ..... Ubisoft
PUBLISHER ..... Ubisoft

Ubisoft's racer is all about the official licence. Eleven teams, 22 drivers, and the new Sepang track will be included, as will unique personalities for each driver.

UBISOFT SAY The most realistic, challenging, exciting F1 game ever created.

PSM2 SAYS With such a fine crop of driving games, whether track or city-based, it's difficult to see who, except for staunch F1 fans, is going to buy this. It's also worth considering EA and Konami's efforts.
GET IT IF You enjoy technical realism and the pure ideals of best-car-wins racing.
DON'T GET IT IF You like driving through crowded shopping centres, trying to shake off the rozzers.



SMUGGLER'S RUN

DEVELOPER ..... Angel Studios
PUBLISHER ..... Take 2

Reviewed on pg92, *Smuggler's Run* is a riot to play and a fine example of PS2's power, with its enormous landscapes and nippy, hill-leaping action. It's distressingly hard to play alone, but the two-player team Loot Grab mode has turned our office air blue this month. It doesn't have a plot or elaborate cut-scenes, but it's entertaining stuff all the same.

TAKE 2 SAY Epic Views. Complete Freedom. Incredible physics. Morality not included.

PSM2 SAYS 'Oh, you think you're getting away with nicking my contraband, do you. Well... oh, *sheeet* – I've driven off a waterfall. Brilliant!'
GET IT IF You aren't a redneck hick, but still want a game that'll make you whoop occasionally.
DON'T GET IT IF You're with Customs and Excise.

RC REVENGE PRO

DEVELOPER ..... Acclaim
PUBLISHER ..... Acclaim

Race miniature remote-controlled cars around theme-park based courses, occasionally letting rip with a lighting bolt or volley of mines. The physics engine's pleasantly bouncy and it'll undergo some admittedly much-needed graphical tweaking before launch.

ACCLAIM SAY *GT* meets *Crash Team Racing* in messed up miniature mayhem.

PSM2 SAYS Give us full-sized wailing sirens and screeching tyres.
GET IT IF You've tried *GT*, but miss mine-dropping, tiny racing action.
DON'T GET IT IF Day-glo colours make you feel vaguely unwell.

REMOTE CONTROL
ASSAULT AND BATTERIES
An early build of RC Revenge Pro indicated that it needed a lot of work before it slipped into the must-buy category.

TOP GEAR DARE DEVIL

DEVELOPER ..... Kemco
PUBLISHER ..... Kemco

Another free-roamer, *Dare Devil's* got some excellent ideas – including the ability to screech through the city streets, smashing things and driving in improbable places in Mini Coopers, Italian Job-style. But like *Smuggler's Run*, we feel it suffers from not really having a coherent motive for all the mission based action.

KEMCO SAY 16 challenging levels, recreated with the utmost attention to detail.

PSM2 SAYS Could be good fun, but felt very slow when we played it at ECTS.
GET IT IF You want to race around a city, but in daylight. Stitch that, *Midnight Club*.
DON'T GET IT IF You don't want to spend a lot of time collecting floating coins.

WILD WILD RACING

DEVELOPER ..... Rage Games
PUBLISHER ..... Rage Games

As dirt racers go, *Wild Wild Racing* can't help but lose out to *Smuggler's Run*. The physics engine isn't as satisfying and the short-cut system doesn't utilise the drive-wherever-you-damn-well-please mechanics as well. Still, the stunt tracks are excellent fun, the extra cars are suitably daft and, if you're a concerned parent, it's all perfectly legal.

RAGE GAMES SAY Sophisticated physics engine, fantastic appearance, Original title. A must buy!

PSM2 SAYS If you want a racer with improbable leaps and skidding, it's your only option. But it still isn't as good as *Smuggler's Run*.
GET IT IF You want to play as a UFO and float over the barriers. You scoundrel.
DON'T GET IT IF Crashing, reversing, crashing and reversing isn't your idea of racing.

MIDNIGHT CLUB

DEVELOPER ..... Angel Studios
PUBLISHER ..... Take 2

Comparing Angel Studios' two free-roaming games is like trying to decide whether you prefer Bullitt or the Dukes of Hazard – they're both fun, but set different moods. *Smuggler's Run* is a cross-country jaunt; all sweeping vistas and improbable stunts, but *Midnight Club* is a more grimly realistic affair, full of tight turns and back alley short-cuts.

TAKE 2 SAY Two fully functioning cities. Some very dysfunctional drivers.

PSM2 SAYS It clearly couldn't have been done on the PSone, but doesn't *quite* look like a PS2 game. It almost looks like a trial run for *The Getaway*, which promises to be incredible.
GET IT IF You like smashing up scenery in cars.
DON'T GET IT IF You disapprove of deliberately running old men over.

SHOOTING

"SILENT SCOPE'S EXACTLY WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE – A STRAIGHT CONVERSION OF A DECENT ARCADE GAME"

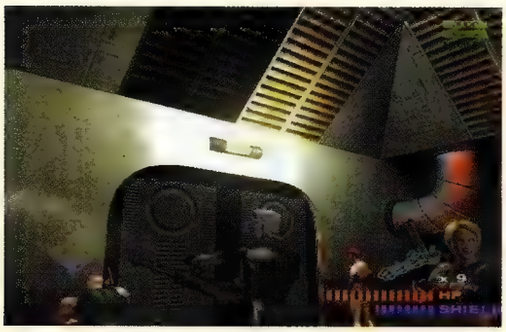
X SQUAD

DEVELOPER ..... Electronic Arts
PUBLISHER ..... Electronic Arts

In its Japanese incarnation (*X Fire*), this comes across like an early Arnie film – dumb, with some occasionally exciting firefights. EA seem to have ironed out the more glaring graphical twitches for the UK version, which is something to be thankful for. The strategy elements are less confusing in English and the plot's been translated.

EA SAY First ever squad-based 3D action shooter for the PS2 console.

PSM2 SAYS The idea's nice, but the execution lacks flair. And the puzzles are very, *very* weak.
GET IT IF You'd have preferred *Syphon Filter* if it revolved around a German techno massive.
DON'T GET IT IF You want next-gen tactical action shooting. Waiting for *Metal Gear Solid 2*'s an idea...



TIMESPLITTERS

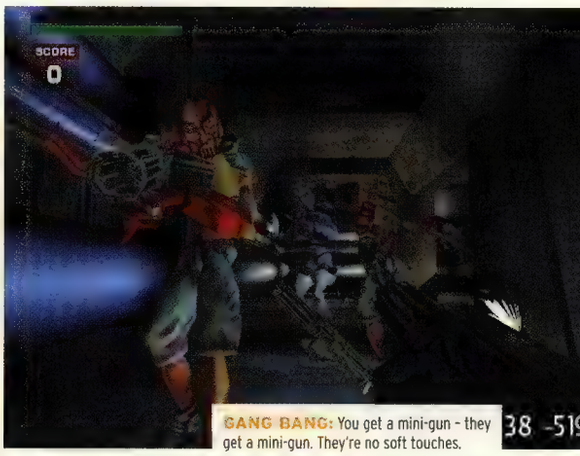
DEVELOPER ..... Free Radical Design
PUBLISHER ..... Eidos

We've devoted a fair bit of space to *TimeSplitters* already, and we're willing it to be good with all our jaded hearts. It *could* be an essential purchase, the game that gets put on every time you've got your mates round – an instant classic. Or it could just be a decent game with comedy zombies. We only wish we could be sure.

EIDOS SAY Why play last year's games when you can play this year's game?

PSM2 SAYS It's original, rather than a sequel or conversion. It's got all the potential to be a must-have.
GET IT IF You want a four-player game on the PS2.
DON'T GET IT IF You think putting humour in a *Doom*-style game is close to sacrilege.

PAR FOR THE CORPSE: Don't be fooled by the graphics - the gameplay's *very* serious.



GANG BANG: You get a mini-gun - they get a mini-gun. They're no soft touches.

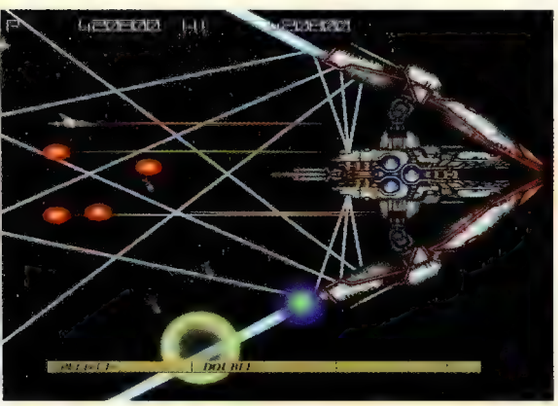
GRADIUS 3 AND 4

DEVELOPER Konami
PUBLISHER Konami

Everything looks better with distance. As long as you fondly remembering the likes of *Gradius*, you'll happily ramble on about the good old days of hugely playable coin-ops. Play it again, though, and you realise it's rubbish, as we discovered to our horror in PSM2#02.

KONAMI SAY Hardcore blasting action in the ultimate scrolling shoot-em-up

PSM2 SAYS Leave your memories intact, and this on the shelf.
GET IT IF You get all misty-eyed when a voice says "Destroy them all".
DON'T GET IT IF You want a game with polygons in it. And you don't miss the '80s.



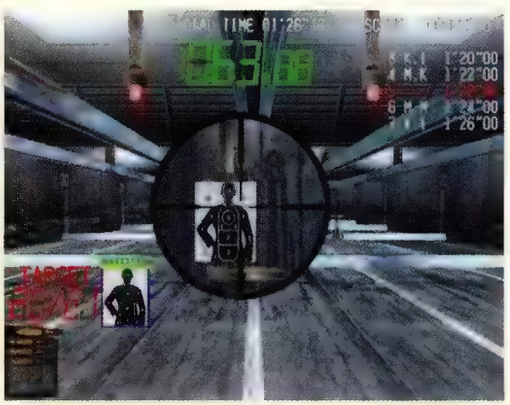
SILENT SCOPE

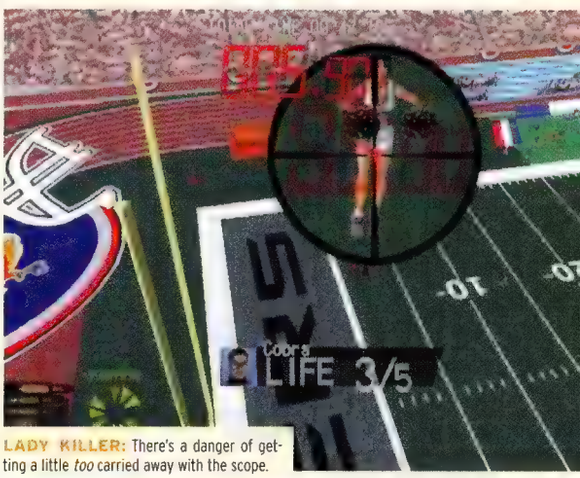
DEVELOPER Konami
PUBLISHER Konami

Reviewed on pg88 of this issue, *Silent Scope's* exactly what it looks like – a straight conversion of a decent arcade game, except without the whopping great gun bolted onto the front.

KONAMI SAY A perfect conversion of the killer arcade sniper game

PSM2 SAYS It's fun to play, although there's not a lot to keep you coming back to it. Arcades just aren't capable of the same things as the PS2, these days.
GET IT IF You like your shooters detached, cool, calm and collected.
DON'T GET IT IF It'll give you 'Nam flashbacks.





LADY KILLER: There's a danger of getting a little *too* carried away with the scope.

ZOOM AND BUST: These targets bleed... how realistic do you want it?

ISS

DEVELOPER ..... Konami
PUBLISHER ..... Konami

Beckham et al were already recognisable in the Japanese code but Konami have got the FIFPRO licence for the UK version, meaning that all the players will have their proper names. We already like the involved play of *Jikkyou*, so if they can eliminate the slowdown and ramp the crowd detail up this'll be a must for anyone with even a passing... erk, interest in football.

KONAMI SAY The King of football games returns with real player names.

PSM2 SAYS Good, but we're desperate to get our hands on a copy of *ISS 2001*.
GET IT IF You're a fan of *ISS* and want a challenging, realistic football game.
DON'T GET IT IF You want to pull off an overhead kick the first time you pick up a pad.

NHL 2001

DEVELOPER ..... Electronic Arts
PUBLISHER ..... Electronic Arts

Ice Hockey might be a bit of an insomniac's sport in this country, but the *NHL* series is still a reputable one. EA seem to equate realism with shininess, but the player's faces show emotional responses (think 'pain'), the movement animations are excellent and the ice sprays up pleasingly when executing lightning turns.

EA SAY High-flying, hard-hitting, big-shooting powerplay hockey simulating all the on-ice action.

PSM2 SAYS EA seem to have gone hyphen-crazy in order to flaunt our ten-word description restriction. Cheeky buggers. Game looks great, though.
GET IT IF You want some brutally violent sporting action, but *Speedball 2100* was a disappointment.
DON'T GET IT IF You don't care about ice hockey. Easy, eh?

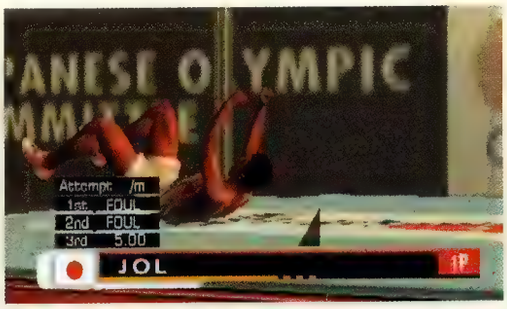
INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD

DEVELOPER ..... Konami
PUBLISHER ..... Konami

Tracing its lineage all the way back to *Hyper Sports*, *ITF* includes some nice control innovations along with the pad-thrashing, including Analogue clay-shooting and bemani-style rhythmic gymnastics. Nice animations, too.

KONAMI SAY Now with even more amazing graphics and new events.

PSM2 SAYS Limited one-player appeal, but good for friendly competition. Too late to cash-in on Olympic fever, though.
GET IT IF You want to see who's got the fastest fingers among your mates.
DON'T GET IT IF You want a sports game relying on tactical thinking.



FIFA 2001

DEVELOPER ..... Electronic Arts
PUBLISHER ..... Electronic Arts

After losing on penalties to *Jikkyou Soccer (ISS)* in PSM2#02, EA are promising tweaks to the UK version of *FIFA* that might give them the edge in the rematch. Apart from supporting four players and banishing any hint of slowdown, the player AI is being upgraded to make the supporting players' role more effective. With typical licensing flair, they'll also be adding a remix of Moby's *Bodyrock*.

EA SAY Seven international players stamp their seal of approval on THE football game for PS2.

PSM2 SAYS To be honest, we'd rather have a good game than all the licensing in the world. Lucky, then, that *FIFA* promises to deliver both.
GET IT IF You want a fast-paced kickabout.
DON'T GET IT IF You want a game that rewards skill and finesse.

MADDEN NFL 2001

DEVELOPER ..... Electronic Arts
PUBLISHER ..... Electronic Arts

Typical. It isn't even proper football, and it might be the most realistic sports game of all time. The detail on player uniforms in the new *Madden* game is incredible and the animations are beautifully fluid, but the tooth-jarring collisions are the best bit, with a physics engine that seems to take each player's weight and speed into account. Superb. Our US-based mates have excitedly assured us that it's just like the real thing, chatting happily about 'pump fakes'... and the like.

EA SAY Awesome NFL action with first-ever exclusive NFL Coaches Club licence.

PSM2 SAYS It looks incredible, and there're still people in this country who love the *Madden* series.
GET IT IF You want to sneakily show off your PS2 to your mates while playing sports games.
DON'T GET IT IF You curse people who say 'soccer'.

SKY SURFER

DEVELOPER ..... Idea Factory
PUBLISHER ..... Virgin

Sky Surfer's chute never really opened in PSM2#01, with a combination of hazy graphics and frustrating gameplay leaving it splattered across the tarmac. It's unlikely to change at all for the UK launch, so we can't imagine that we'll be recommending it.

PLUS!
DON'T MISS SSX
One of the best launch games in the 'sports' category, and one of the best PS2 games full stop.
MASSIVE REVIEW STARTS ON pg16!

VIRGIN SAY Stomach-churning thrills with this stunning X-treme sports simulation.

PSM2 SAYS Maybe they were playing a different game to us.
GET IT IF You want to go Sky Surfing, but can't be arsed with getting in a plane. You're made of money.
DON'T GET IT IF You value your sanity.

FANTAVISION

It's a game you have to play to fully appreciate. Soothing and spectacular, it could be PS2's first massive puzzler.

This may be the most relaxing game we've ever played. From the soft, lilting voice of the female announcer to the pleasant sensation of drifting through the air while pretty explosions happen all around you, it's a game to play before bedtime, perhaps with a cup of hot milk. It's soothed us countless times after playing the enraging likes of *Sky Surfer*, and we love it for that.

Imagine, then, our delight when we learned that the UK version of *Fantavision* will feature a two-player mode, and our dismay that this move seems to guarantee it'll be bumped up to full price. The new two-player mode features a vertical bar on the screen, and allows each player to restrict the other's range of fireworks by stringing their own elaborate chains together. Expect the competition to be friendly rather than frantic, and watch the results of your efforts together in glorious 3D panorama-vision.

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** SCEE
- **PUBLISHER** SCEE
- **FEATURES** Six levels. 1-2 players. New competitive two-player mode.

SONY SAY

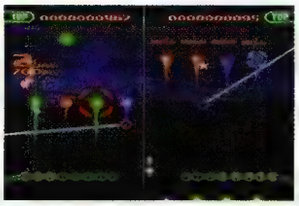
No fireworks upstairs? Try *Fantavision* – guaranteed explosions every time.

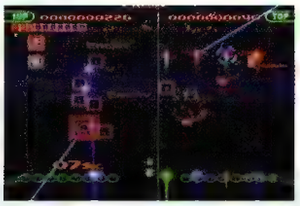
PSM2 SAYS

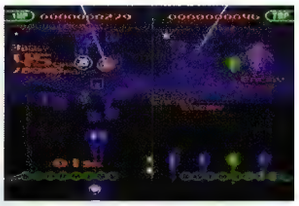
For 20 quid, this would have been a must-buy. At full price, it's going head-to- head with the entire launch line-up, and it's unlikely to be at the top of many people's shopping lists, nice as it is.

GET IT IF You're prone to getting over-excited and prefer Bonfire Night to Christmas.

DON'T GET IT IF You're frightened by '50s smiling children.







"FANTAVISION MAY BE THE MOST RELAXING GAME WE'VE EVER PLAYED"

FIRE WORKS: *Fantavision* combines relaxing sequences with frantic firework triggering

AQUAAQUA

DEVELOPER ..... Zed 2
PUBLISHER ..... Sci

Previewed on pg51, *AquaAqua* is the Yang to *Fantavision's* Yin – a frantic mass of colour and strange shapes, and surprisingly competitive in two-player mode.

SCI SAY The most fun you'll ever have with water, without getting wet.

PSM2 SAYS More stressful and frustrating than *Fantavision*, but no less challenging and rewarding. It's a bit of a cutie, and some of the graphical glitches will have you using some particularly unsuitable adult language.
GET IT IF You want a puzzler that makes you shout at the TV.
DON'T GET IT IF Flashing lights make you feel sick.

DISNEY'S DINOSAUR

DEVELOPER ..... Ubisoft
PUBLISHER ..... Ubisoft

As film conversions go, *Disney's Dinosaur* has mixed appeal – the film boasts lush visuals, but not much else. The game involves combined use of a lemur, a Pteranadon and an Iguanodon to stroll around the Mesozioc era. When we played it, we couldn't quite work out what was going on – there wasn't much in the way of conflict, and the problem solving seems to be of the 'use the Pteranadon to fly over chasms' variety.

UBISOFT SAY Gorgeous 3D real-time action in a prehistoric fight for survival.

PSM2 SAYS With the pre-order system, we honestly can't see that many kids ending up with a PS2 until after Christmas, so we aren't sure who's going to buy this.
GET IT IF You like Dinosaurs. And Disney films.
DON'T GET IT IF You're expecting film-standard visuals.

ANKYLOSAUR
THE FAMILY OF DINOSAURS KNOWN AS
ANKYLOSAURIA TAKES IT'S NAME FROM THE
ANKYLOSAUR. IT WAS THE LARGEST DINOSAUR

ETERNAL RING

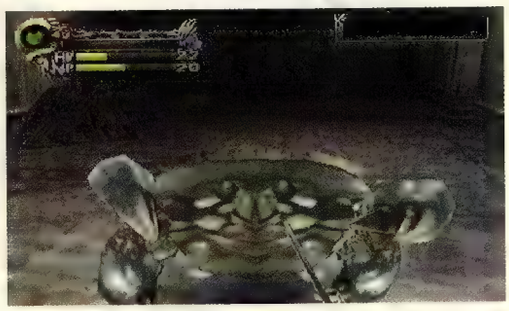
DEVELOPER ..... From Software
PUBLISHER ..... Crave

Keeping the name that still brings a wry smile to our faces, *Eternal Ring* joins *Evergrace* in the RPG battle.

We slated it last issue for being slow enough to make fighting turtles – yes, you do... with a pointed stick – seem exciting, and it's going to need a massive speed injection to be any fun over here. Of course, the translation will help, but it'll still be about magic rings.

CRAVE SAY Unlock the secrets of a magical island strewn with dungeons, dragons and deep-seated evil.

PSM2 SAYS To be honest, we can't see this being salvageable. Sorry.
GET IT IF You want an old skool RPG, or your reactions aren't what they used to be.
DON'T GET IT IF You want a game that lets you move faster than you can in real life. On crutches.



SUPER BUST-A-MOVE

DEVELOPER ..... Taito
PUBLISHER ..... Acclaim

As puzzlers go, *Bust-A-Move's* always been the most gloriously pointless of the lot – just as it should be. Shoot bubbles at the ceiling with little dinosaurs, line them up and make them pop. It's less maddening than *AquaAqua*, less fiddly to control than *Fantavision*, and a lot less pretty than either of them. To be honest, we're hard pushed to see how this is going to differ from the PSone installments, but we're confident it'll be compulsive fun all the same.

ACCLAIM SAY More addictive than crack.

PSM2 SAYS Acclaim, we applaud your style, but hope you don't know what you're talking about. Besides, if you like puzzle games you've probably already got *Bust-A-Move*. Haven't you?
GET IT IF You want fine-tuned puzzling action.
DON'T GET IT IF You want your PS2 puzzle games 3D.

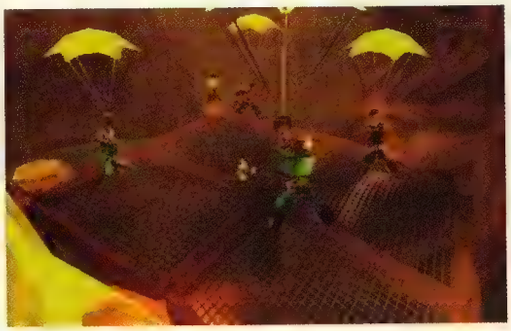
RAYMAN REVOLUTION

DEVELOPER ..... Ubisoft
PUBLISHER ..... Ubisoft

The game engine's near-identical to the original, but *Rayman Revolution* will offer more free-roaming action than the relatively linear first game. It's as jauntily playable as ever, the graphics have been freshened up for PS2, but it just doesn't give us that heady visceral thrill we want from playing games.

UBISOFT SAY Hours of action, adventure, fun and humour for gamers of all ages!

PSM2 SAYS It won't define the PS2 as the sleek black wonderbox it really is, but we've got a certain fondness for *Rayman* just the same.
GET IT IF You want the best in cartoon platforming.
DON'T GET IT IF You want cars, automatic weaponry and stainless steel knuckle-dusters.



EVERGRACE

DEVELOPER ..... From Software
PUBLISHER ..... Crave

Originally planned for PSone, the ambition and scope of From's Manga-esque RPG has led it onto PS2. The 'Free Growth' system is interesting – it's possible to dress your character's head, body and hands in different items of equipment, which will appear on-screen and affect how he fights. The Japanese original was reasonable, with two characters to switch between and full speech, so the UK release is promising.

CRAVE SAY Take on two characters to discover the secrets of an ancient land.

PSM2 SAYS Some innovative touches, but wait until you can build villages in *Dark Cloud* or go mad on a guitar in *Ephemeral Fantasia*.
GET IT IF You can't wait for *Final Fantasy 10*.
DON'T GET IT IF You want something *really* different from your RPGs.

NEXT ISSUE:
ALL THE UK LAUNCH GAMES – RATED!

READ PSM2'S REVIEW OF SSX ALREADY? WE'RE STILL GASPING FROM THE BLAST.

Any title that gets every member of the PSM2 team clutching their faces, thumping their fists into the air and returning to their desks well-oiled with adrenaline *has* to be on our cover.

This issue, we also rate four other titles that'll be joining the mighty *SSX* in the UK launch line-up. *Wild Wild Racing*, *Smuggler's Run*, *Midnight Club* and Konami's arcade smash, *Silent Scope*, all get played longer and harder than anywhere else. We hope you appreciate our ass kissing-free stance to game reviewing – the scores PSM2 awards games are the ones you can trust. **PSM2**

If you feel a PSM2 review is unfair, treated a game harshly or praised it too much, then let me know. Send an e-mail to psm2@futurenet.co.uk.

REVIEWERS

PLAYING PS2 LONGER, HARDER, FASTER THIS ISSUE:

The world's most knowledgeable and outspoken PlayStation 2 fans

DANIEL DAWKINS

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Sports, RPGs, Shooting
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** SSX, SSX, Ssx...

Dan pulled tricks through two consecutive 14-hour *SSX* marathons (truthfully!) the minute PSM2 acquired review code. We guarantee we've pushed the game more than anyone.

JOEL SNAPE

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Fighting, Shooting
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** SSX, SFEX3, Tekken Tag

This inch-high, shy Brazilian dance combat specialist is the source of all *Tekken* knowledge. Other videogame magazines come to Joel to tap into his brain. It usually gets messy.

PETE WILTON

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Sports, Strategy
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Jikkyou World Soccer

The Jon Pertwee of videogaming, Pete's the gaming veteran that just doesn't seem to age. He treated us to his verdict on *Smuggler's Run* this issue, as well as treating us all to his *KeyboardMania* skills.

JONNIE BRYANT

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Mech Battle, Strategy
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Ring of Red, Armoured Core 2

Christ! No special lens was used in the taking of this shot. Jonnie knows more about real-time strategy games than – in the words of an average videogame mag – "is probably healthy".

TIM WEAVER

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Sports, Shooting
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** TVDJ. No. That's a lie.

A man who's not content with shrugging his shoulders and *Hmmm*ing about a game if it's no good, Tim spits opinion like he's been chewing shitty wasps.

MARK GREEN

- **SPECIALIST IN:** Shooting, Platform
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Silent Scope

'Mack' is the daddy, the guv'nor, the gansta hoodlum when it comes to games with guns. Who else could we unleash on *Silent Scope* than this man? His words bite on pg88...

DAN JOLIN

- **SPECIALIST IN:** DVD movies, Internet
- **HAVING FUN WITH:** Big home-cinema sound

He's back! Did you miss him? Total Film's Reviews Editor is back in the PSM2 private cinema watching Fight Club this month. And then – get this – *getting paid for it.*

MAIL US NOW!

E-MAIL: PSM2@FUTURENET.CO.UK

Have YOU got yourself an import PlayStation 2 and fancy writing a short, informative review for PSM2? Found a pre-ordering bargain for the UK PS2 that the whole country should know about? What do you think about the PS2 games so far? Got any dirt on the review crew above? Share the wealth and mail us now!

›UNRIVALLED INFORMATION フハワヌキニラ

WHY PSM2 REVIEWS ARE THE BEST YOU'LL READ!

We love games, but won't resist caving a shabby game's face in – stick with PSM2 to get the best buying advice around.

BEST SCREENS:
We've captured the most dynamic images from the games, with all the levels and views you need to see. They're the best shots you'll clap eyes on!

PASSIONATE OPINION:
PSM2 reviewers squeeze every ounce of detail out of a game, and tell you everything you need to know. Our reviews are as entertaining to read as the best games are to play.

REVIEWS
FANTAVISION
FANTAVISION
Whack on the kettle, break open the Digestives, and prepare for the world's most spectacular fireworks night. No pomp, no ceremony, no snazzy texture-mapping. Fantavision is the PlayStation 2's simplest, and arguably greatest, invention yet
"EVEN WHEN THE GAME INEVITABLY FRUSTRATES AND BEATS YOU, IT'S NOT BECAUSE YOU'RE STUCK, BUT THAT YOU HAVEN'T REACTED QUICKLY ENOUGH"
INSIGHT
BEATING THE GAME
VERDICT
85

IMPACT POINT:
Here you'll see the defining moment in the game that convinced your PSM2 reviewer that this is a shiny blue disc you should run out and buy or just leave on the shelf.

VERDICT BOX:
A chunky, comprehensive summary of the game. You'll find out what the best and worst features of the gameplay, graphics, sound and lifespan are, as well as getting a score out of 100. We feel this is the most useful way of indicating the game's quality, rather than some oddball score out of, say, 30.

GAMER'S CHOICE:
Your essential guide to how the game compares to others in its genre. These will be PS2 games where possible, but due to the system's ability to play all your old PlayStation discs we'll also compare the new games with the classics...

INSIGHT:
Here you'll find amazing facts about the game and its developers, carefully selected by the PSM2 reviewer to give you a deeper understanding of the title. Or make you laugh.

ALL THE INFO YOU NEED:
Crammed with every useful fact about the game, you'll find everything here - from how many players it supports to how many levels and playing modes you can expect. For Japanese discs, we'll also give you a guide to how impenetrable the text is. Neat, no?

›HONEST AND ACCURATE シつモカ

PS2 REVIEWS

We review every last PS2 title from around the world. Each review is clearly marked with its country of origin, and prices indicated are when bought in that country.

›HONEST AND ACCURATE シつモカ

DVD REVIEWS

Every month PSM2 teams up with *Total Film* magazine to review the best of the month's DVDs. We treat extras as a bonus and base our scores largely on the film's quality.

›HONEST AND ACCURATE シつモカ

PSone REVIEWS

We select the cream of the crop of new UK PSone releases. In this backward compatible world, PSM2 is also your guide to the AAA games on the machine that won't die!

PSM2 WARNING!

›HARD-HITTING シつモカ キハつキア

THE PSM2 SCORING SYSTEM:

0-29 Shoddy stuff. A game in this category is so bad, *well*, it's just laughable really...

30-49 Possibly fun in the short term, but there are some serious faults in the game's design.

50-69 50 is considered 'average' in PSM2 (unlike some other mags). You can trust our scores.

70-84 An entertaining game that *just* misses out on being something big. Highly enjoyable, though.

85-90 What are you waiting for? If a game gets a score in this category, you really ought to treat yourself. You won't be disappointed – PSM2 highly recommends it, and that's the only endorsement you need...

90+ An unmissable gem which should feature in the game collection of everyone reading PSM2. It's a supreme example of its genre and pushes your PlayStation 2 in every respect. You must play this.

DON'T MISS THESE:

PS2 REVIEWS

WILD WILD RACING 082
It's quick and gritty, but out of the racers available for launch, should it be your first choice?

SILENT SCOPE 088
We tell you whether this classic arcade conversion satisfies all our long-range headshot fantasies, or has us recoiling in horror.

Smuggler's Run 92
Midnight Club 96
Silpheed 98
G-Saviour 100
KeyboardMania 101

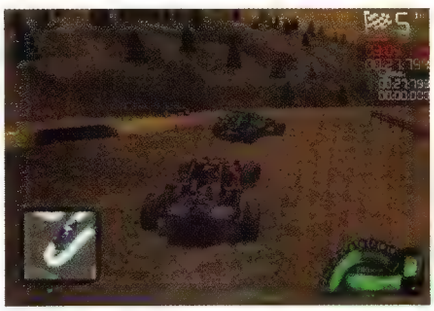
DVD REVIEWS

Fight Club 102
Jurassic Park/The Lost World Box Set 103
Magnolia 103
The Green Mile 103
The Insider 103
The Hurricane 103
American Psycho 103
A Clockwork Orange 103

PSone REVIEWS

Medal of Honor: Underground 104
Spyro: Year of the Dragon 105
Prince Naseem Boxing 105
This Is Football 2 105
Digimon World 105
Incredible Crisis 105
Jungle Book Groove Party 105

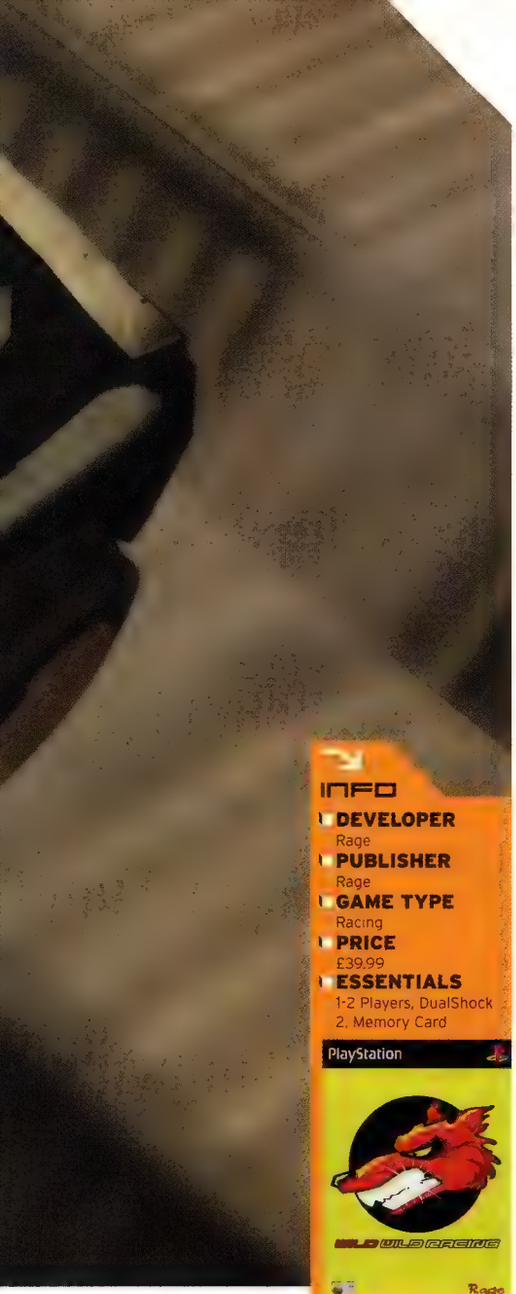
FLY, MY PRETTY
Hit those jumps and, especially in Stunt mode, you'll take your life in your hands.



OUT UK LAUNCH

WILD WILD

"A SUMPTUOUSLY HIGH FRAME-RATE, SMOOTH TEXTURES AND THE SORT OF BLOOD-CURDLING



TRACTION MAN: Iceland's desolate wastes provide a serious challenge - miss the dry racing line and control becomes very tricky.

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Rage
- **PUBLISHER** Rage
- **GAME TYPE** Racing
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1-2 Players, DualShock 2, Memory Card

PlayStation

FEATURES

- An arcade-style racer, it has you tearing up the track on five different continents in high-speed, powersliding dirt buggies.
- Nine basic buggies, four with three upgrade stages, five with two upgrade stages. Two bonus vehicles (including a spaceship).
- 12 Championship levels to race through in three countries.
- Time Attack, Versus and Challenge modes.
- Variable weather.

So wild they named it twice. Or, at least, that's what they'd have you believe...

REVIEWER: Tim Weaver

Americans don't seem to like it, the Internet doesn't seem to like it, and the Oxford English Dictionary probably won't be 100% happy with its lack of commas, but *Wild Wild Racing* is actually a sturdy and surprisingly audacious racer – though undoubtedly one with some frustrating flaws.

One of the first UK-developed games on the system, *WWR* comes from Liverpool and Rage, a codeshop that, despite some success, has never threatened to break the mould in terms of game design. They don't look like they're about to start here, with a game that – despite the added bonus of a few PlayStation 2-assisted bells and whistles – is essentially pretty standard racing fodder. Indeed, with its minimalist buggies and cross-continent race meetings, it could be any number of games on the PlayStation – and, if we rubbed the mist from our eyes, the SNES and Mega Drive – though, cosmetically, this is plainly a game with its feet firmly planted in the next millennium.

GROUND TECHNICIANS

The power of PS2, then, allows for an impressive level of technical achievement in *WWR*, with a sumptuously high frame-rate, smooth textures and the sort of blood-curdling pace that only *Ridge Racer 5* could compete with on its middle settings. The scenery on each of the five courses won't cause you to stop in your tracks, but mountains rise deliciously into the night sky in Iceland, while the concrete clutter of a bizarrely placed building site is perfectly represented in India. Perhaps the nicest surprise is pelting▶

RAGE

***WWR'S* CREATORS**

This is Rage's first title for PlayStation 2, although they're currently developing the slightly more dusty than dirty, *Rally Circuits: Africa*. Their second racer should be ready for mid 2001.

RACING

PACE ONLY RIDGE 5 COULD COMPETE WITH ON ITS MIDDLE SETTINGS"

BIG'N'BOUNCY: The driving physics give you a good feel for the wobbly suspension and potholed courses.

TRUE GRIT: Buggies throw up some impressive particle effects, but it's just not dirty enough for our liking.

BIT-MAPPING: The bottom-left map gives a detailed view of opponents positions, while the line at the bottom shows your nearest rival.

▶around Mexico in the rain and having lightning flashing in the sky above you, illuminating the winding S-bends and valleys stretching beneath.

The lavish environments are complemented by a lack of *any* annoying pop-up at all, though the game does 'fade in' scenery, far enough away for it not to affect the game, but close enough for it to slightly disappoint. The only real time it becomes a problem is on the Icelandic course where you're required to belt it through a tunnel which, as you enter it, seems fairly short, then continues to unfurl, despite the fact that all the time you think you can see the end.

EXTRA-VEHICULAR ACTIVITIES

Perhaps most notable of all, though, are the physics which seem to improve – and, more importantly, start to come into play – the further into the game you get. The standard three cars, with the possible exception of the surprisingly subtle Typhoon, lack the acceleration, top speeds and handling required to make much of an impact on the bumps, corners and half-pipes of the courses, but the later vehicles start to ride the terrain brilliantly, allowing for some extravagant leaps and knee-trembling, mid-air 360°s. Even better, rain, snow and the time

INSIGHT

Rage have been around for yonks, and enjoyed some minor success on the Amiga with a *Kick Off* killer called *Striker* – which was, for the time, the most stunning football game around. Ah, golden days...

JUST THE TWO OF US

The two-player mode in *WWR* is effective, though slightly hampered by the same course design woes that see the one-player fall short. On the wider, more open tracks – and providing you're both of roughly the same standard – there's certainly plenty worth pursuing.

FAMILY DUELS:

TYRED AND EMOTIONAL:

CHANGING VROOMS: The cars can be customised with your own choice of colour and wheels. We recommend the blue.

"LATER VEHICLES RIDE THE TERRAIN BRILLIANTLY, ALLOWING FOR EXTRAVAGANT LEAPS AND KNEE-TREMBLING, MID-AIR 360°s"

HASTA LA VISTA: The horizon's impressive, and retains a high amount of detail even in the middle-distance.

DEEPLY DARK: *WWR* boasts some effective time and weather options. There's nothing like getting mucky on a damp evening.

DOG HANDLING: While the motors react well to the courses, lightly catching a wall can send you pogoing out of control.

Control freaks.
You're not alone in struggling to stay on the track – CPU cars will lose it too.

WORLD IN MOTION

Five courses make up *WWR*, with Mexico and Australia only being unlocked after completion of the Amateur and Pro cups. Undoubtedly the best is Iceland, which allows proper powerslides and spacious overtaking, and the worst can only be India. Here's a few samples...

USA

INDIA

AUSTRALIA

MEXICO

"RAIN, SNOW AND THE TIME OF DAY WILL HAVE A BEARING ON WHEEL TREAD, MEANING TIMED POWERSLIDES RUN THE RISK OF SPINNING YOU IN BARELY CONTROLLED CIRCLES"

of day will have a bearing on wheel tread, meaning timed powerslides run the risk of not only helping you to successfully negotiate hairpins but, more likely, send you spinning in barely controlled circles.

SLIDE RULES

Powersliding, as you quickly come to realise, is an important part of *WWR*. The corners in the game don't leave a lot to Lady Luck, with a plethora of 90° turns and ludicrously difficult elevations requiring either prior knowledge of the course or constant application of the brake, which works overly well, killing the engine completely in time for you to stop short of an oncoming barrier. The more you play the courses, the more you start instigating powerslides and, as you begin on the Amateur and Pro level tracks – which amount only to slight variations on the existing routes, just with harder CPU opponents – you get to know the points at which powersliding proves useful. Eventually, instead of dabbing hopelessly at the brake, you powerslide, enabling you – fingers

SHORT CIRCUIT

Each cup slightly changes the layout of the course, and the more you drive it, the more shortcuts you'll notice. Indeed, if you're to seriously challenge for honours, you'll need to master these sneaky by-ways, some of which prove just as tricky as the main thoroughfare.

SMACK MY DITCH UP: Gap in a local farmer's fence...

GRACING FIELDS: Mouthorisen ploughing of your own.

DUSTY, BUT TRUSTY: The lack of any real carve-up on the individual courses is disappointing.

THE WILD BUNCH: The buggies are bunched going into this corner, but the pack breaks up over the course of a race.

CAR VERY MUCH

The more cups and challenges you complete, the more cars and tracks you unlock until, eventually, you'll be privy to some of the game's more bizarre vehicular creations...

LUPINE NEEDLE:

SILLY CONE:

BONNIE AND GLIDE:

RIVAL KILMER: There are four, five or six other cars in a race, depending on your championship level (Novice/Amateur/Pro).

where the course is about to go next. Iceland, like the USA, opens things up a bit, allowing for all the excitement of overtaking and the wheel-spinning prospect of frozen lakes, while Mexico is fine in stretches but relies too heavily on a string of S-bends that really slow things down to a staggeringly tedious c-r-a-w-l. The only disappointment with Australia, the last course, is that it couldn't have come along sooner, such is its capacity for dirt-spewing powerslides and nasty

"WATCHING THE INAPPROPRIATELY NAMED DEMON ATTEMPT TO PULL AWAY IS LIKE HAVING SOMEONE SLOWLY REMOVING HAIRS FROM YOUR ARSE"

▶crossed – to almost come back on yourself, which is perfect for the spaghetti-like sections in Mexico and Australia. The speed at which you powerslide also takes a lot of the niggle out of acceleration, which very few of the cars seem particularly good at. Stopping dead with the brake and then having to watch the inappropriately named Demon attempt to pull away is like having someone slowly, and painfully, removing the hairs from your arse.

The courses vary in quality quite significantly. The opener, set in the deserts of the USA, is enjoyable enough, but India is hideous, woefully designed to the point where you're hurtling along at face-melting mph with absolutely no idea isolated battles with the evil CPU cars. The wide, barrierless roads mean one good shunt of an opponent sends them plummeting – wonderfully – to their death. Each course, though, suffers from the same problem: they're just so buttock-pummelingly infuriating.

CRASH BARRIER

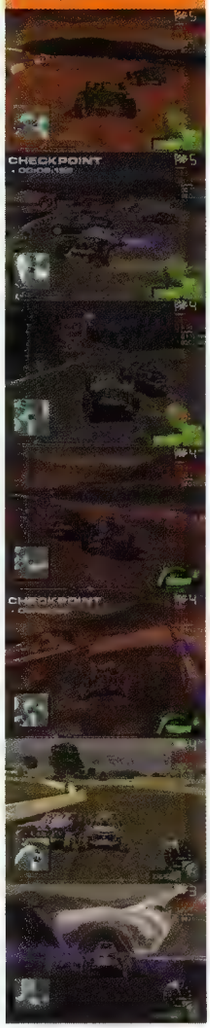
Rarely has a game reduced the PSM2 office to a state of life-endangering anger. At speeds upward of 200kmh, the last thing you want to see are bits of sticky-out scenery that *stop you dead* if you as much as brush them. Successfully powersliding through some of the game's most demanding hairpins and then watching your vehicle touch a

THE GREEN, GREEN GRASS: Tracks are unashamedly monotone in their construction. Rich flora brings some welcome colour.

NOSE TO THE GRIND: Lighting and shadows are always spot-on, giving you good depth and height realisation.

IMPACT POINT

The vein-bursting but exhilarating CPU opponents, on the second and third championship, drive perfectly from start to finish, and display no conscience at all as they shunt you aside.



EVERYTHING BEGINS WITH AN E:

GETTING LETTER

The enjoyable and baffling Challenge mode is effectively a time attack, where you complete a course as quickly as possible while collecting the letters of the vehicle you're attempting to win. To unlock further cars, you can try your luck at a challenge where you have to push a ball along the track within a set time period, and to round things off, there's also a gravity-defying stunt mode, slightly reminiscent of the *Rush* series of arcade games.

KEMON EVERYBODY:

INSIGHT

Wild Wild Racing's ultimate vehicle is the Wild Wolf. Only a silhouette in the manual, the Wolf can be unlocked by coming first in the Pro championship and completing all the challenges.

stretch of slightly forward barrier will seem like punishment from Satan himself, as will the all-too-frequent unseen corners that follow the game's soaring leaps. Also, *WWR's* many shortcuts have a habit of presenting you with awkwardly placed trees and inexplicable road decoration such as central barriers that you can hardly make out, which means shortcuts are often anything *but*. India's the worst culprit: some sections that look like shortcuts you drive up to and find they're invisible bleedin' walls.

To add to the frustration the game's courses are one long stretch of road, rather than a track segmented by stages. This decision has cost *WWR* a number of American fans, and it's not hard to see why this has proven so unpopular Stateside, particularly as one costly error – often through no fault of your own – means you're playing catch-up for a very, *very* long time. If the courses had been reduced, errors might not have proven so expensive, though the flipside of this is that, graphically, the courses move from built-up areas to open fields and mountain ranges smoothly and adeptly. Indeed, this feature has been both championed and lamented in equal measure in the PSM2 office, which suggests that it may well be something of an acquired taste.

ALTERNATIVE ROCK

What's certain is that *WWR's* a game of some promise, though one with significant flaws. Racing games just can't afford to have you confused over the direction you're travelling in, and *WWR does* confuse you, to the point where, on the Indian course, you're genuinely lost. Add in the frustration of hitting scenery and the fact that, despite its jaw-clenching difficulty later on, you still feel compelled to play, and you have a game of mixed emotions, but one that proves PlayStation 2 can, at least, offer a genuine – if problematic – alternative to *Ridge 5*. **PSM2**

Wild Wild Racing will be available on the day of launch. That's November 24th.

WILD DRIVER'S CHOICE

1 **SMUGGLER'S RUN**
Similar vehicles, but different premise in a forthcoming combination of law-breaking and fun off-road driving.

2 **RIDGE RACER 5**
Powersliding heaven in enjoyable, if limited, classic arcade racer.

3 **WILD WILD RACING**
After initially impressing with its potential, the ideas can't save an infuriating ride.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Fast, exciting, and a good 'feel' on the physics front
- Upsetting scenery-brushing and some awful course design.

GRAPHICS
+ Clean textures, no pop-up and smooth, pleasing environments.
- The backgrounds are static, and the locations unambitious

SOUND
+ A funky dance soundtrack, and throaty engine noises.
- The birds sing louder than the cars rev.

LIFESPAN
+ Two courses to unlock, challenge modes and plenty of vehicles.
- Variations on same courses means samey feel later on.

OVERALL
Immensely fun in places, but maddening in others, with a little more thought and time *Wild Wild Racing* could have been a contender.

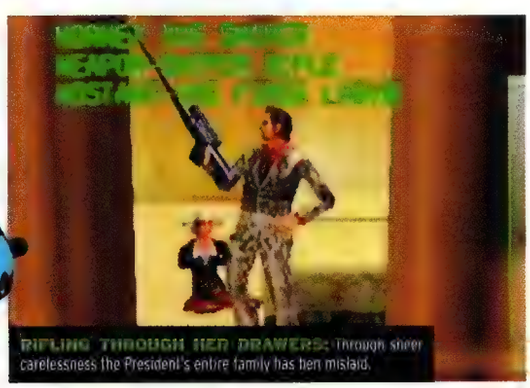
71
EXASPERATING

OUT UK LAUNCH

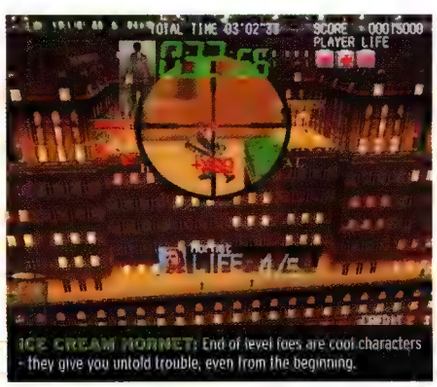
SILENT SCOPE

Left a bit... right a bit... squeeze the trigger and... out of time?! Tension-filled sniping in games is nothing new, but *Silent Scope* pits your aiming skills against a mercilessly ticking clock, to nerve-shattering effect. Take a closer look...

REVIEWER: Mark Green



RIFLING THROUGH HER DRAWERS: Through sheer carelessness the President's entire family has been misled.



ICE CREAM HORNET: End of level foes are cool characters - they give you untold trouble, even from the beginning.

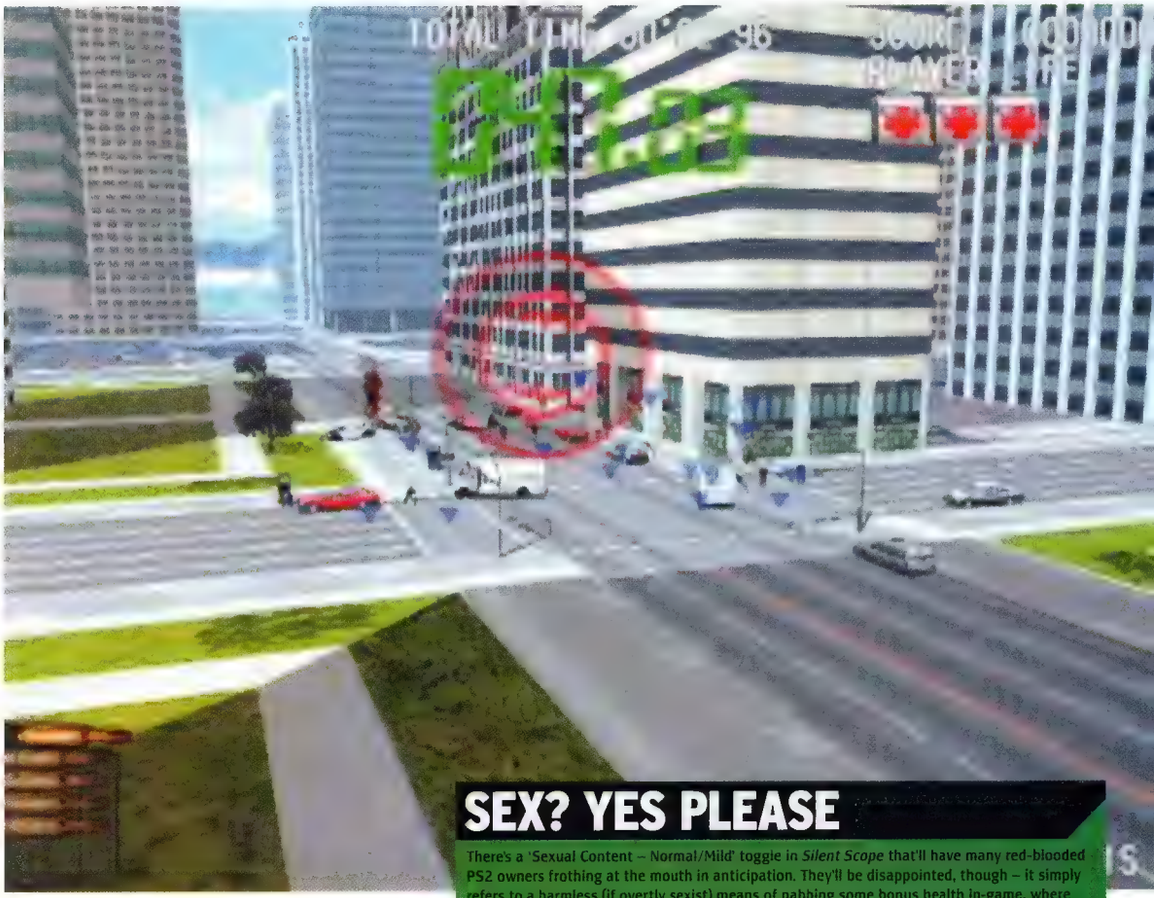
INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Konami
- **PUBLISHER** Konami
- **GAME TYPE** Action Shooting
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1-2 players, DualShock 2, Memory Card

DETAILS

- Eight levels of frantic sniping.
- Multiple routes at three points.
- 15 bonus modes, including time attacks and shooting ranges.
- Lots of gratuitously near-naked girls.

WOOD BEAMS: The night-time mission has you scurrying through dense woodland, but enemies' laser sights blow their cover.



Like time-lapse photography of gently rolling clouds, *Silent Scope* takes a subject matter that's slow-paced by nature, and cranks the speedometer up to decidedly unnatural speeds. Here, the excruciatingly deliberate pace of sniping – sweat trickling down your nose and your heart bashing against your ribs as you slowly... *slowly*... guide your crosshairs over a distant human head – collides head-on with the synapse-frazzling velocity-drenched delights of arcade gaming. And, against all odds, it actually works.

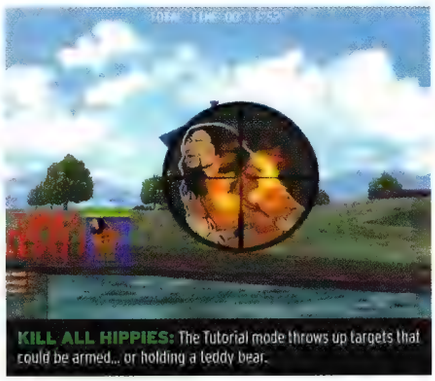
In fact, if *Silent Scope*'s success on the PS2 draws the raised eyebrows of anyone, it'll be those who've already experienced the game in its original Konami coin-op form. This was (and is) an arcade shoot-em-up like no other. The weighty rifle bolted onto the front of the machine featured a second screen, visible only through the sight on the gun. The idea: scope out the scene and the multitude of faraway targets on the main monitor, then turn your eye to the 'magnified' view through the sights, quickly aim, pull the trigger, and then... watch necks snap and stomachs burst in extreme close-up.

"AND IT'S FAST. SILENT SCOPE BETRAYS ITS HERITAGE AS A BRASH, BASS-BOOMING ARCADE MACHINE AT EVERY TURN"

FUNKY AT FIRST

Without the bolt-on rifle, the game should have waved a tearful goodbye to most of its appeal. But Konami's replacement for their gun-shaped gimmick – a superimposed sniper view that's toggled on and off with a simple tap of L1 – works a treat. It's not ideal, as switching the sights is fiddly, while hunting for prey with nothing but the zoomed-in view means obscuring a hefty chunk of screen behind the swollen crosshairs. But once clear tactics emerge (flit around the scene with sights off, hover over a target, zoom in to take aim, then – bang!), *Silent Scope* will please all but blinkered arcade purists.

CAT AND MOUSE: The arcade conversion looks decidedly sharp - even with multiple foes in the jungle level here...



KILL ALL HIPPIES: The Tutorial mode throws up targets that could be armed... or holding a teddy bear.

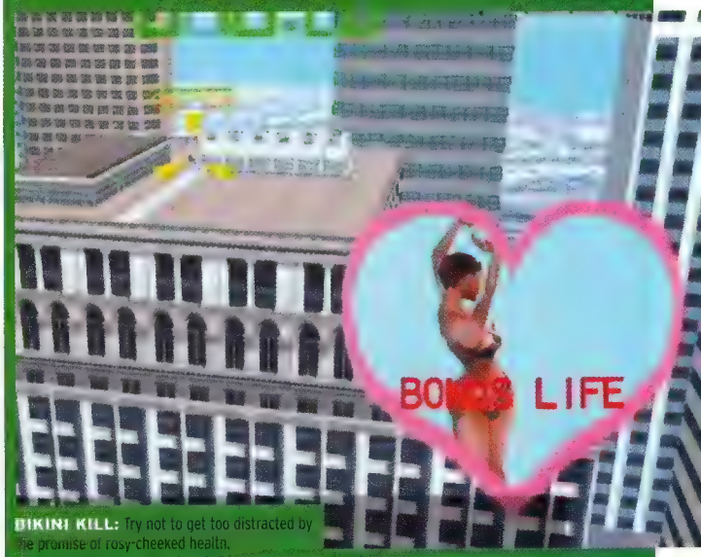
And it's *fast*. *Silent Scope* betrays its heritage as a brash, bass-booming arcade machine at every turn. No time here for the deliciously slow distance aiming that you've grown used to in PSone games like *MDK* and *Metal Gear*. With a rapidly-ticking clock filling a good quarter of the screen, guards who duck behind walls or fire back if your bullets don't connect, and even an adrenaline-pumped radio 'buddy' screaming "Hurry Up!" into your ear if you take a second to think, *Silent Scope* is utterly relentless. The expansive night-vision sections are the nastiest – frantically sweeping pitch-black rooms for guards as precious seconds race by just can't be good for the old ticker.

INSIGHT

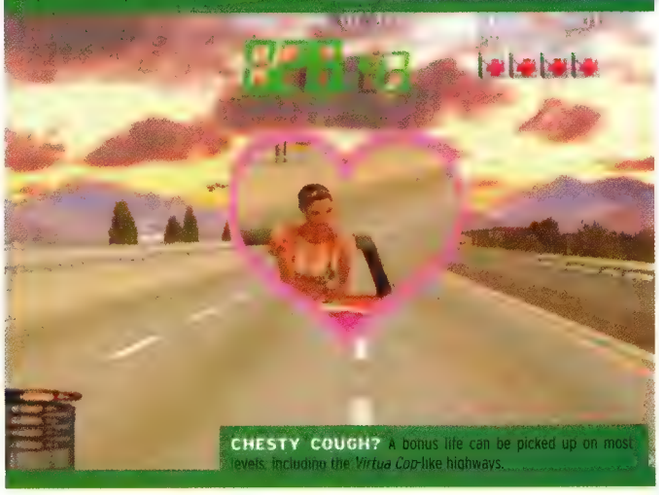
- *Silent Scope* is a common sight at military bases in the USA, with army personnel using real-life sniping skills in-game.
- The original name for Tom & Jerry – the crossbow-wielding duo in the Jungle level – was 'The Killing Machines'
- The PSG-1 and MSG-90 sniper rifles in *Silent Scope* can also be found in *Metal Gear Solid*.

SEX? YES PLEASE

There's a 'Sexual Content – Normal/Mild' toggle in *Silent Scope* that'll have many red-blooded PS2 owners frothing at the mouth in anticipation. They'll be disappointed, though – it simply refers to a harmless (if overtly sexist) means of nabbing some bonus health in-game, where sweeping your sights over a pretty girl in a bikini will net you a 'Bonus Life'.



BIKINI KILL: Try not to get too distracted by the promise of rosy-cheeked health.



CHESTY COUGH? A bonus life can be picked up on most levels, including the *Virtua Cop*-like highways.

SILENT BUT VIOLENT: Your hits are illustrated with a vivid plume of bad guy claret... it feels frighteningly satisfying.

PLANE CRISP: The Harrier can be taken with, or without the scope. Careful though, it fires back.

daughter from the top of a skyscraper, or pursue her inside a packed stadium where have-a-go hero players try to rugby tackle the fiend to the ground? – but otherwise the position of every future corpse is fixed, making repeated plays seem increasingly like memory tests.

Not that you'll be repeatedly playing through the Story mode too often, because *Silent Scope* is all over worryingly quickly. The rubbery wondrousness of Sony's Analogue stick makes aiming a whole lot easier than wielding the several hundred grams of metal and plastic glued onto the original coin-op cabinet, and it takes little more than 60 minutes' play (and the equivalent of spending around a tenner in the arcade) to reach the end credits – and that's with a miserly number of continues.

There's a simply electrifying finale that'll have you itching to play through to the end again – but it's shocking how quickly you'll manage just that.

BULGING WITH BONUSES

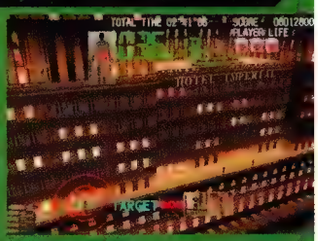
Hats off to Konami, then, for an expansive range of bonus modes that rescue *Silent Scope* from a sticky end. The timed challenge is an obvious one – the chance to test your sniping skills against the clock via three beautifully swift chunks of the Story mode – but you'll return to it again and again to shave seconds off your best time, and scream blue murder with every millisecond-wasting miss. And while the rest of the bonuses – a selection of simple *Point Blank*-esque shooting galleries that test speed, accuracy and visual acuity – aren't the most unsurprising additions to *Silent Scope*'s arsenal of extras, they're ace fun, especially if you've got competitive friends to bounce personal bests off.

The other benefit of the bonus extras – and, specifically, the console-exclusive exterior target ranges – are their crucifyingly tough victory

LORRY GRAYSON: On foot, in the middle of the highway, you have to eliminate Cobra before he flattens you. Is this fair?

ZOOM SERVICE

Just when the terrifying speed of *Silent Scope* looks set to blow the PlayStation 2 to bits, the game slows *right* down for this brief-but-tense game of Hide-and-Seek. Your targets are pacing around inside a gorgeous hotel, chatting on phones and generally... er, killing time. From your position they're simply too far away to see, let alone distinguish them from the innocent house guests who pace around the adjoining rooms. The sniper sights, then, come into their own as you hastily sweep the lit windows for gun-heavy evildoers. Time's not on your side, and your intended objectives casually slip from view... temple-pulsating stuff.



WINDOW PAIN: Check for movement in lit rooms, but be sure occupants are legitimate targets.

SKULL CAPPED: Time bonuses reward

COLLATERAL DAMAGE: ...pop a civilian

SIGHTS FOR SORE EYES

Mastering the adjustable brightness of the sniper sights via the finger-twisting 'Controller Option B' is the only route to success.

NIGHTWATCH: As well as blinding night-

SPOT REMOVER: As you parachute out of the

▶Even at such speed, though, there's room for some breathtaking changes in pace. You begin by peering through the top window of a 50-floor skyscraper, picking off a handful of ground troops and roof-dwellers. That's panicky stuff – but within two minutes you're racing along a highway, having to compensate for the relatively slow speed of your bullets as you plug enemy drivers and send their cars spinning into crash barriers. Another 120 seconds, and you're parachuting towards a mansion, smashing spotlights on the ground far below to avoid being caught by their roving glare.

"THERE'S AN ELECTRIFYING FINALE THAT'LL HAVE YOU ITCHING TO PLAY TO THE END AGAIN - BUT IT'S SHOCKING HOW QUICKLY YOU'LL MANAGE JUST THAT"

It looks pretty saucy, too. *Silent Scope* demonstrates the power of PlayStation 2 perfectly – not by bringing eye-splatteringly staggering visuals to your TV, but by cloning a couple of tonnes of arcade magic, right down to the individual pixel, without once dropping a single frame. Articulated trucks roar past your sights, night-vision reveals wandering troops as glowing green ghosts, and entire cityscapes – kilometres wide in all directions – fill the screen as you float above in a twisting, turning, diving and climbing helicopter. Special effects are few are far between, admittedly, but things are generally moving far too fast for you to notice.

LOSES IT AT LENGTH

All in all, it's uncomplicated, blink-and-you'll-die entertainment – which, ironically, is why *Silent Scope* begins to lose momentum fairly quickly. Thrilling in short bursts, the endless sequence of aiming, firing, aiming and firing inevitably begins to grate after a few hours. There's a regular choice of routes – will you rescue the President's

IMPACT POINT

Bosses can be seen off with multiple shots – but far more satisfying is a super-accurate head-shot, greeted with a satisfying (but slightly creepy) image of a bullet-addled skull. Rivalled only by the game's breathtaking final scene – but we won't spoil that for you.

conditions. The Story mode too often relies on speed alone, and you'll invariably find yourself shunning the time-wasting zoomed-in view in favour of less accurate – but equally deadly – gunplay from afar. Conversely, the target ranges won't hand over the big points unless you aim at a cardboard enemy's actual weapon, or an apple held by a bewilderingly underdressed lady. That makes accuracy as crucial as speed, and forces you to exploit the sniper sights to the fullest – something that should really have been true of *Silent Scope*'s main game, too.

A FLAWED MASTERPIECE?

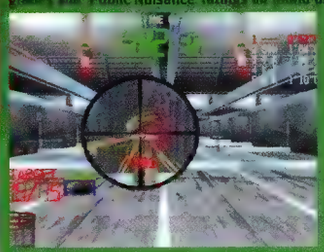
So, where does that leave Konami's shooter? It's a superb game – and an expertly converted one at that – but it's ever-so-slightly flawed at length, and stranded on a console that we *know* can deliver a whole lot more.

It's hard to justify spending 30-odd quid on some limited blasting thrills when you could nip down the Ten-Pin Bowling Alley and spend far less cash on the original gun-equipped coin-op – but then it'd be cruel to deny yourself such hair-bristling pleasure in the comfort of your own home. Buy it, by all means – just don't expect *Silent* to be golden for much longer than a few weeks at best. **PSM2**

Konami have confirmed Silent Scope *for their launch line-up.*

FREE RANGE

The only reward for finally securing the President's safety in Story mode is the usual end credits sequence. For more gratifying rewards – namely, the elusive 'Perfect Sniper' status – you'll need to point your rifle in the direction of the bonus sections. The target ranges here test everything from your ability to shoot a melon apart, to how quickly you can fell a cardboard terrorist while standing on a steadily rocking boat in the middle of the night. It'll be 'F' grades and 'Public Nuisance' ratings all round until you've had a good few hours practice.



MELONIE SYKES: When you're not saving heads of State, work out that aggression on fruit.

SHACK-ATTACK! She could be unarmed and harmless, or packing a cannon and psychotic.

GUNMAN'S CHOICE

1 **TIME CRISIS**
Feel a real gun nestling in your hands and savour the revolutionary 'crouch-reload-stand-fire' play on PSone.

2 **SILENT SCOPE**
Frighteningly frantic, but without a light gun add-on it's second-best.

3 **POINT BLANK**
Madcap minigames on PSone, with a terribly short-lived solo mode.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Silky sniping combined with a giddying pace that never lets up
- It's essentially a glorified shooting gallery. Repetitive.

GRAPHICS
+ Detailed and deliciously fast, with no sign of the judders.
- PlayStation 2 has overtaken the arcades, and it shows.

SOUND
+ Realistic and unobtrusive yells, gunshots and music.
- The choir in the final stage is a bit over-the-top.

LIFESPAN
+ Hordes of bonus games that truly test your abilities.
- The simplistic play will begin to pall fairly quickly.

OVERALL
Thrilling to begin with, and brilliantly converted from the arcade, but short, sharp play won't keep you buzzing indefinitely.

77

TRIGGER HAPPY

HARD TO KILL: From the moment your crosshairs turn yellow you're in imminent danger of stopping a bullet with your chin.

OUT UK LAUNCH

SMUGGLER'S RUN

Forget eye-patches and beardy yo-ho-hos, the only smugglers on this run are ram-raiding, cop-car-ditching petrol-heads... **REVIEWER:** Pete Wilton

What's immediately obvious about *Smuggler's Run* is that it does things you simply couldn't do on PSone. Ride up a hillock and you'll find your view extends for miles and miles, taking in huge expanses of forest, desert or icy tundra. While first impressions are that you're boxed-in by mountain ranges, all but the tallest and steepest of these can be clambered up or at least negotiated around via narrow passes, so that each level seems to grow before your very eyes. OK, some details, like sections of railway track, still tend to pop-up at odd intervals but most of the time the scenery is close to faultless.

Once you've stopped gawping, it's time to get on with the game which, in most missions, involves caning it from point-to-point against the clock while avoiding the attentions of law enforcement vehicles and rival smugglers. These adversaries are remarkably smart, trailing you down through rivers and up inclines, or racing off to snatch the loot from under your nose. Get caught by the fuzz and it becomes an automotive smash-a-thon – your motor getting battered to the point of unhealthy black smoke, engine failure and, eventually, arrest.

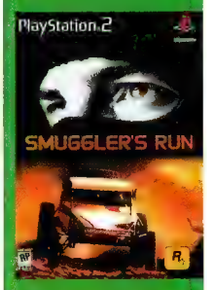
Like any decent driving game, however, the real enemy is not other vehicles but the laws of physics – sliding around corners and bombing up slopes would be a breeze without them. Instead, if you want to stay off your roof, judging how tight a turn you can make or how steep a hill you can climb becomes vitally important. Early on you'll underestimate gravity at every other turn and see your buggy or truck tumble, lurch or even do a wheelie as natural forces whip the wheels out from under you. This

11:29
$100,000
1/5
77 MPH
OPPONENT PICKUP
FAIR WARNING: It may not seem much help but seeing the enemy succeed really does spur you on.

"REALISM IS ONLY TAKEN SO FAR – YOU CAN SURVIVE HORRENDOUS DROPS OFF EAGLE-HIGH PRECIPICES"

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Angel Studios/Rockstar
- **PUBLISHER** Take 2 Interactive
- **GAME TYPE** Driving
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** 1-2 Players, DualShock, Memory Card



DETAILS

- Three undulating levels, each one a virtual 15 square miles.
- 30 missions – ten on each level.
- Seven different vehicles that leave a trail of damaged parts behind.
- Five different gangs.
- Three playing modes: Smuggler's Mission, Turf War & Joyridin'.
- Rugged, interactive terrain. Animals and pedestrians are fair game.

AIM OF THE GAME...

A green direction arrow will point the way to the pick-up point. This appears as a plume of green smoke with an item inside. Once you've grabbed the stash the arrow turns red and directs you to the drop-off point, indicated by red smoke. A chopper will take the loot off your hands and credit your account accordingly. In the two-player Turf War mode the arrow swings between static pick-up points and rival contraband-carrying vehicles. Mug 'em!

FLARES ARE COOL AGAIN: They look basic but they fulfil the crucial function of indicating where your stash is at

COPTER LOAD OF THIS: Deliver the goods and your mate in the chopper will take them away to their criminal customers.

PINCHED BOOTY ACTION: Nicking dodgy goods off a rival gangster has nothing on getting them yourself. Fact.

is one of *Smuggler's Run's* strong points – the interaction between terrain and vehicle is spot-on, so that learning to zig-zag up an incline or straighten up as you coast down one is essential. One annoyance worth highlighting is that if you do end up with all four wheels in the air, trying to right yourself can be a frustratingly ticklish business. The clever thing is that realism is taken only so far, so that you can survive horrendous drops off eagle-high precipices then plunge into a fast-flowing stream and emerge the other side without even getting so much as your carburettor wet.

BOYS WI' NO HOOD: Impact damage results in body panels and trim flying off your motor. They stay on the ground, too.

BREAKING THE LAW

The Story mode kicks off simply enough with a couple of races designed to get you accustomed to the unique handling of the S.U.V. or the Buggy – other vehicles are unlocked as you progress through the levels, and, generously, you can pick from all seven available vehicles in the other modes. Pretty soon, however, you'll be asked to start earning your keep by transporting illegal wares for a tidy fee. Usually there are three or more pick-ups to make during one mission so it's a case of learning the fastest and safest route between each point and then following it without getting your bonnet caved-in by the rozzers which, after the first

INSIGHT

- *Smuggler's Run* will be the first off-road driving game to appear on PS2.
- Rockstar Games are the people behind the similarly criminally minded *Grand Theft Auto* series as well as the upcoming *Midnight Club*.

ROAD KILL: Hapless animals and back-packing humans can be flattened just for fun. Does this raise moral questions? Nah.

BRIDGE RACER: To get the jump on both rozzers and rival gangs picking the right route is essential – this bridge is a short-cut

NON-TRIVIAL PURSUIT: Those cop cars get everywhere trying to run you off the road, eh? Just keeping motoring.

POLICE, STOP!

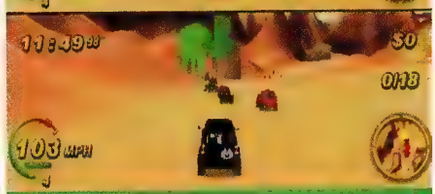
The clock isn't all you're up against, if you want to succeed you'll also have to escape from the law. The cops chase you doggedly and only sharp changes of direction or clever climbing will put them off. In fact they're so smart that many missions can become frustrating as, however hard you try, you can't lose or out-pace them.

DANGEROUS SIGNS: You're especially vulnerable after a clean-off as you keep moving. Where to next, Mr Arrow?

DROP ZONE: Horrendous falls are all part of the fun. Plummet headlights-first over the edge and LIVE!

4x4 AND 2-ON-2

The one-player missions won't keep you smuggling forever, so it's just as well that there's a decent two-player option to sink your teeth into. This gives you the opportunity to compete as heads of rival gangs or enter a tag free-for-all.



IN CHARGE: Tactics make quite a difference when playing with a CPU controlled team. Do you steal, block or go for glory?

BEHIND THE COUNTER: You're told when your opponent has made a pick up, head them off for a satisfying steal.

MR CHOO-CHOO: What we want is more interactive bits of scenery like this stoked-up train crossing the Canadian Border.

QUIT BUGGING: If you prefer sheer pace and bouncing dynamics, use the Buggy, it tends to fall apart quickly, though.

BLOCK ROCKIN' SNEAKS: Your CPU controlled buddies are vulnerable, so watch their backs as they head for base.

"SMUGGLER'S RUN DOES THINGS YOU SIMPLY COULDN'T DO ON PSONE – RIDE UP A HILLOCK AND YOU'LL FIND YOUR VIEW EXTENDS FOR MILES"

WALTER RALLY: You'll find the Rally Car quick and nimble, but it's a bit of a softy when it comes to climbing mountains with it.

NO SCRUBS: Flora gets flattened and boulders bounce off your bonnet. The extent of background interaction is very impressive.

▶ten or so missions, is no easy matter. The disappointing thing is that there's not much more to it than that. Unlike, say, *Driver* on PSone, there's seldom any call for stealthy motoring – once you have the contraband on-board the police immediately clock you and steam in – and there isn't much point in blocking or ramming other road-users as this frequently does you more harm than good.

Even the different types of contraband don't actually cause you to change your style of play – there are fragile items to collect, but a Ming Dynasty vase thrown into the back of a V8 monster truck will pinball around quite happily across mountainous terrain and still arrive at the drop-off point in one piece.

The plot, then, becomes largely irrelevant so that all you're left with is the enjoyable driving experience itself.

IMPACT POINT

Find an enemy with a bootful of stash and this helpful blue arrow will tell you that it can be liberated. Just keep ramming the other vehicle until they give it up, then race to the nearest drop-off point to hand it over to your homies and earn mucho respect, as well as a fistful of folding.

If you get bored with the Story mode after one too many close calls with the law, there are a couple of other one-player options to toy with: you can choose to battle rival gangs in a kind of tag with stolen goods, or just go for a joyride, exploring any of the levels with no time limit. Fine, but what about an option to use weapons, upgrade your wheels or spend all the fat rolls of cash you accumulate? There's not even the hint of a Replay mode or the chance to go paint-crazy on your gang's vehicles.

PAIR'S FAIR

What stops *Smuggler's Run* from leaving you feeling short-changed and hacked off is the two-player. While it isn't quite as fast as the one-player it goes at a fair lick with little slow-down, despite the mound of carnage splattered across the screen. Here, ramming is actively encouraged as it allows you to steal from the other drivers – especially satisfying when you crash into your mate, steal his loot and then barrel back to your own drop-off point, revelling in your own devious cunning.

While the main game isn't perfect, the two-player options are *so* playable you'll weep. And the way you can swap vehicles between this and Rockstar's other launch racer, *Midnight Club* (see pg108) is innovative. It's true that we expect much better off-roaders that *Smuggler's Run*, but this is a good-looking start. PSM2

Look out for this on November 24th.

WATER BABY: Fording a stream is no problem to these off-roaders – swoosh on by...

BANDIT'S CHOICE

1 **SMUGGLER'S RUN**
Incredible scenery, fun – but realistic – physics and I-fought-the-law gameplay.

2 **WILD WILD RACING**
Similar dynamics to *Smuggler's*, but pretends to be nothing but an enjoyable dirt racer.

3 **CRASH TEAM RACING**
For a fun alternative with weapons, slidey handling and cute characters this well drawn boy is a star.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ The handling of the trucks and buggies is brilliant.
– It's basic point-to-point racing that can bore.

GRAPHICS
+ Serene landscapes that let you see for miles.
– The two-player isn't as fast as it should be.

SOUND
+ Grinding gear changes and cracking collisions
– Twangy, annoying tunes and hicktown samples.

LIFESPAN
+ You'll keep coming back to trash a mate's motor in two-player.
– The one-player doesn't offer enough variety.

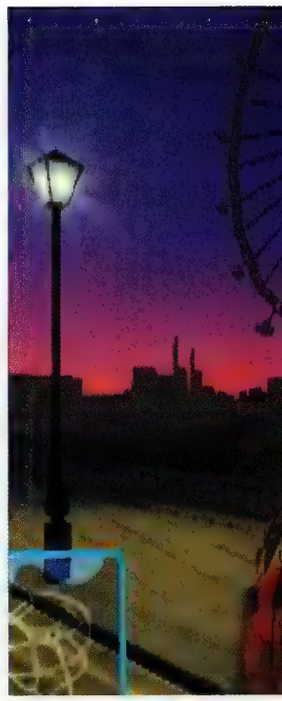
OVERALL
Technically jaw-dislocating, but there's not enough one-player depth to turn infatuation into lasting love. Fun but frustrating.

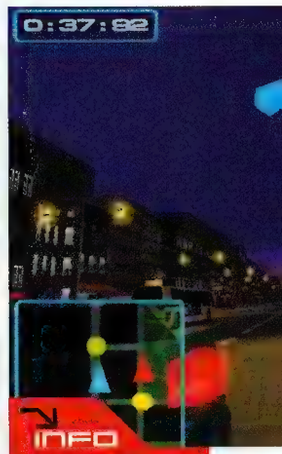
75

RUGGED

STARSKY AND HATCH: For handling and decent climb get [illegible] – but watch those tight turns.

BUCKLE UP
Collisions are hefty, but don't expect realistic car dynamics.





OUT UK LAUNCH

MIDNIGHT CLUB

Softer than Fight Club, but harder than its delicious chocolate bar namesake. Will you melt into the midnight world of pedestrian-endangering, car-trashing, illegal street racing?

REVIEWER: Daniel Dawkins

Darkness. Great for hiding things and sleeping. Rubbish for seeing things and driving. While *Midnight Club's* seedy world belongs in the shadows, it would've looked *so* much better in daylight. The game keeps teasing you with stunning glimpses of dawn. But big yellow never rises. The best approach is to dismiss the game's developers as sadistic vampires, and drive wide-eyed into the charming cities. With a thermos of coffee.

The quickest way to explore these accurately modelled conurbations is to dive into Arcade mode. Choose between London or New York with a selection of the games weedier cars. The realism hits you head on – New York begins in a busy Times Square intersection full of buzzing neon and squawking traffic. Yellow cabs duck down sidewalks, buses shunt past passengers and traffic cements at red lights. You can't quite smell the tarmac, but you'll be keen to tear it up.

GO WITH THE FLOW

Your car handles in an arcade fashion, with the right concessions to detail. Powerslides are accessed with a whimsical tap of the handbrake but require measured counter-steer to correct the racing line. Before you know it you'll be pulling off 360° spins and high speed three point turns. With

"CARS SPARK, BUCKLE AND STEAM AS THE DAMAGE MOUNTS"

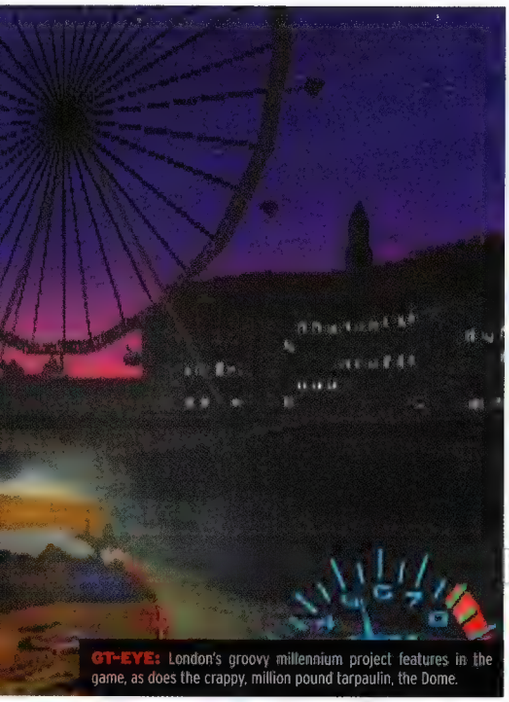
POSTAL STRIKE: Sparks fly and headlights blur, but the British post must get through. The London Eye is watching you...

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Angel Studios
- **PUBLISHER** Rockstar Games
- **GAME TYPE** Street Racing
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **ESSENTIALS** DualShock 2, 1-2 players, Memory Card

DETAILS

- Two courses – city models of London and New York.
- Eight cars and 22 bonus vehicles, all with adjustable colours.
- Dance soundtrack featuring house legend Derrick 'Strings of Life' May.
- Analogue control, manual or automatic gears.


GT-EYE: London's groovy millennium project features in the game, as does the crappy, million pound tarpaulin, the Dome.

LIGHTS OUT: Facing death at 100mph, the London pedestrians curse in pure Cockernee. "You bally fool – you're skills are rotten!"

boxes. Smash traffic lights to cause junction chaos. Wince as old ladies limp into your headlights, bouncing sky-high before continuing on unperturbed. Travelling 100 mph at midnight, you won't spot it all.

POINTS MEAN PRIZES

You can upgrade your mangled motor in head-to-head races or simply beat your rival to win their car. The club members are a contrived bunch, from bad ass Larry Muller to saucy Emily Morton. They'll taunt you with various cheesy quips during the race, which miraculously drive your resolve. When Emilio, a driver of 'questionable masculinity', squeals "I'm coming right behind you", you tend to get a move on.

This pattern of race and reward continues, until you graduate to London and the same thing happens all over again. Yes, it's great to see Big Ben but there's ultimately only two cities to explore. You can tweak weather and lighting effects, but there's only so many ways you can spell 'dark' and disguise the middle of the night as 'dusk' or 'dawn'. Worse, the graphics can sometimes look a bit PSone, especially in the compelling two-player mode.

As a glimpse of the future, *Midnight Club's* astounding. The lively AI deceptively lures you into the

IN-CAR RADAR: Your direction finder *always* knows which way to go.

these skills secured you can enjoy the game's free flowing nature – tearing over traffic lights, smashing down the wrong lane of the freeway and crushing lampposts. It just feels *right*.

When the joy of driving fades you'll need competition. The Career mode will happily indulge these boy racer fantasies. Starting off as an unknown NY cabbie, you're challenged to race by a member of the Midnight Club. If you keep up, he'll invite you to a Waypoint Race – a free-for-all bumper-clattering charge through the backstreets. One finish line, no set routes. A 'knowledge' of the short-cuts is as essential as continued dirty driving.

Your rivals go down fighting, arcing through on-coming traffic and smashing through shop fronts. Cars spark, buckle and steam as the damage mounts. The AI is great – watch in disbelief as pedestrians duck to avoid flying mail

PINK CAR NATION: All motors are look-a-likees, so impact damage isn't a problem. As you'll discover.

IMPACT POINT

Your first Waypoint Race. Following a series of scenic city spins, you're woefully unprepared for the six car winner-takes-all rampage. Rivals grind you into the kerbstones, smashing through short-cuts before leaping the park river. You're alive. You're edgy. You're focused. Game on.

VROOM FOR TWO

Wanton destruction of public property is one thing, but real satisfaction comes from humiliating your mates. Screech around the split screens trying to pick up flags and hit delivery points. It's Capture the Flag see. Set the time to low and the slightest mistake might prove unrectifiable. Intense shin-kicking "did I put you off?" rivalry at its best.

NO PLACE LIKE DOME: Follow the arrows to find the flag, or (as below), the car that's currently carrying the prize...

action. The characterisations exude the hammy hysteria of mid-afternoon soap operas and verge on the tiresome, but, fortunately, everything screams fun, regardless of questionable longevity. Even when races become frustratingly unforgiving, you know where you made the mistake.

If this is the standard for free-roaming racers to come, we can't wait to see what emerges from its shadow. **PSM2**

Rockstar's Midnight Club *will be available on PS2's launch day.*

INSIGHT

Rockstar Games are infamous for their work on *Grand Theft Auto* – a free-roaming gangster drive-em-up with cause and effect gameplay. Their other PS2 game is *Smuggler's Run*, based on free-roaming bandit smuggling. Pattern? What pattern?

SCALLY'S CHOICE

1 GRAND THEFT AUTO 2
Run, drive, shoot, kill. *Grand Theft Auto* caused an explosion of videogame paranoia in the press.

MIDNIGHT CLUB
Current 'go anywhere in an accurately modelled city' king. Faces stiff competition.

DRIVER
Yes, this reviewer prefers *Midnight Club's* raw thrills to *Driver's* polish.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Instant handling, tremendous freedom.
- One-mistake-and-you've-blown-it races

GRAPHICS
+ Achingly realistic city models. Spotlight and rain effects
- Occasional annoying pop-up in two-player mode.

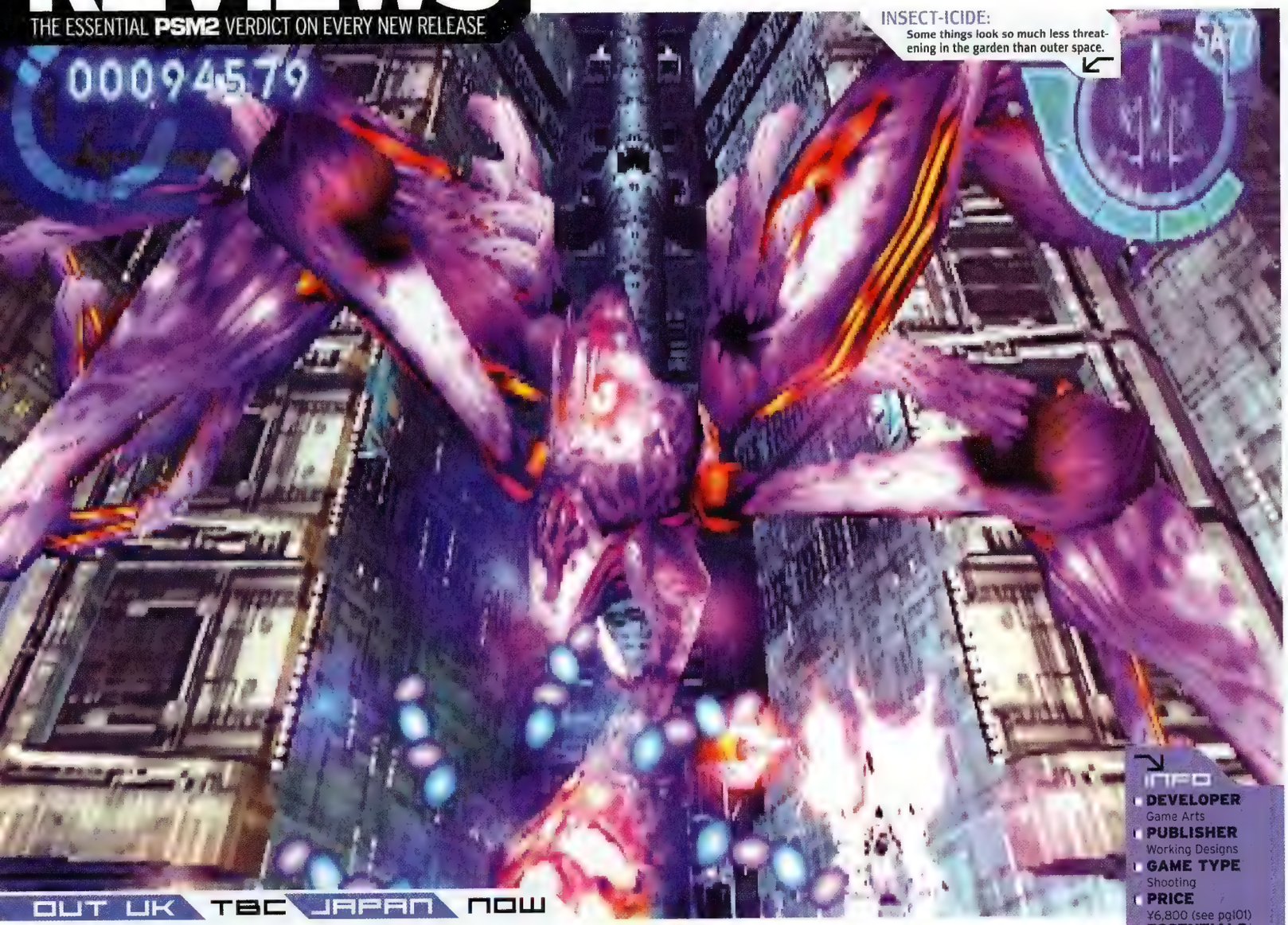
SOUND
+ Unobtrusive toe-tapping house. Wailing civvies in local tongue.
- Your rivals' street-wise jibes cross the Camembert boundary.

LIFESPAN
+ Lots of hidden routes. Sightseeing is fun in itself.
- Seen one big monument, seen 'em all. Racing gets a bit samey.

OVERALL
A laudable attempt compromised by reality-check graphics and overly familiar characters. Dark skies mask bright shameless fun.

72

REAL SHADY



INSECT-ICIDE:
Some things look so much less threatening in the garden than outer space.

OUT UK TBC JAPAN NOW

SILPHEED

Up. Down. Left. Right. Fire. Are all intergalactic skirmishes this easy?

REVIEWER: Daniel Dawkins

Bio-technological hybrids. What a sneaky bunch, eh? The videogame world has been largely free of tyrannical plant life since 1993, when the visceral but limited *Silpheed* was released on the Mega CD. But typically, you turn your back for seven years, enjoy the odd game of *Gran Turismo*, and the next thing you know: the Earth is facing alien invasion from vertically scrolling weeds. Will those crazy plants *ever* learn?

Anyone familiar with *Silpheed* will instantly recognise the PS2 version. To recap for the rest – the graphics border on the sensational, with screaming neon explosions, multi-limbed fantastical bosses and twisting 3D environments. It sounds good and looks better, until you realise that those crashing 3D effects are nothing more than elaborate icing on an almost resolutely flat-planed vertical-scrolling, shoot-em-up.

BAD SEEDS

Even when walls start crashing down on the second level, you can invariably just fly over them. The swirling tunnels of Level Three add nothing to the gameplay save a feeling of "that was nice". So all you're left with are the bad guys – a Borg-like fusion of biology and technology – who go about assimilating your fleet in the rather beautiful cut-scenes. It culminates in an exciting moment when your refuelling ship morphs into a triffid and tries to eat you. Like The Last Starfighter in the Blue Peter garden.

"SCREAMING NEON EXPLOSIONS, MULTI-LIMBED FANTASTICAL BOSSES AND TWISTING 3D ENVIRONMENTS"

Regardless of their fancy appearance, aliens attack in familiar attack waves. Practice lets you anticipate their movement and nullify their fire. There is no need to fear the 'one hit kill' stray bullet à la *Gradius*. Your ship has a shielding system to absorb a finite number of blows. The shields get replenished mid-level, allowing you to tinker with your weapons.

You improve this arsenal by completing levels. Expect standard fodder-searing lasers;

INFO

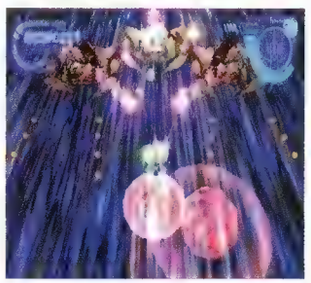
- **DEVELOPER** Game Arts
- **PUBLISHER** Working Designs
- **GAME TYPE** Shooting
- **PRICE** ¥6,800 (see pg101)
- **ESSENTIALS** 1 Player, DualShock 2, Memory Card

DETAILS

- Nine weapons, including Optic Lasers, Napalm Bombs and V-Vulcans... that's not a typo.
- Six levels with split sections and sub-bosses.
- Normal and Hard skill levels, plus adjustable shield strengths to tailor difficulty.

No problem. English voice-overs accompany the cut-scenes. Basic plot: Kill things. Refuel. Kill things. Got it?

"IS IT WORTH PAYING FOR AN ELABORATE FIREWORKS DISPLAY WITH FUN, BUT SIMPLISTIC, GAMEPLAY?"



slow, but powerful bombs and weak, but wide-range, rockets. Sadly, not one weapon screams "I am Jack's smirking revenge!", more "Excuse me, little 'un coming". You can only carry two weapons at a time, which can be fired independently to little advantage. The supposed tactical element of changing guns mid-level is neutered by their similarity.

The greatest sin is that you'll finish the game in a few hours. You've got to ask if it's worth paying for an elaborate firework display with fun, but simplistic, gameplay. It last about as long as a Roman Candle too – a few spurts and it's done. Yes, it'll remind some people of a lost youth in dingy arcades, but so will MC Hammer and Paisley shirts. Those longing for a deep and engrossing challenge, should heed Hammer's advice: "Can't touch this". **PSM2**

Silpheed is available on Japanese import. The UK release awaits confirmation.

INSIGHT

- ***Silpheed*** **was originally released in 1986 on the PC8801 computer.**
- **Game Arts were responsible for shoot-em-up greats such as *Radiant Silvergun* on the Saturn and *Gunstar Heroes* on the Mega Drive.**

PERCY THROWER'S CHOICE

1 **R-TYPE DELTA**
Perfect power-ups and imaginative bosses combine to create a classic scroller with crushing addiction.

2 **SILPHEED**
Exploding graphics, imploding longevity.

3 **GRADIUS**
Looks like a silver filling with equally tooth-grinding gameplay.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Instant and satisfying
- With false tactical depth and scenery dodging.

GRAPHICS
+ *Fantavision* with space ships and cultured 3D.
- Slight slowdown, looks a little 'dark'.

SOUND
+ Chattering squad members and booming explosions.
- Nothing especially novel or engaging

LIFESPAN
+ You can always try to beat your high scores...
- ... but with nothing new to discover, will you want to?

OVERALL
A firework of a game that uses cut-scenes effectively to spice up the non-action. *Silpheed* burns bright to the bitter, but quickly finished, end, leaving a husky shell with no long term appeal.

51

BRIEF ENCOUNTER

Well I'll be dog-gone!

Sony reveals its next generation robo-pup exclusively in T3

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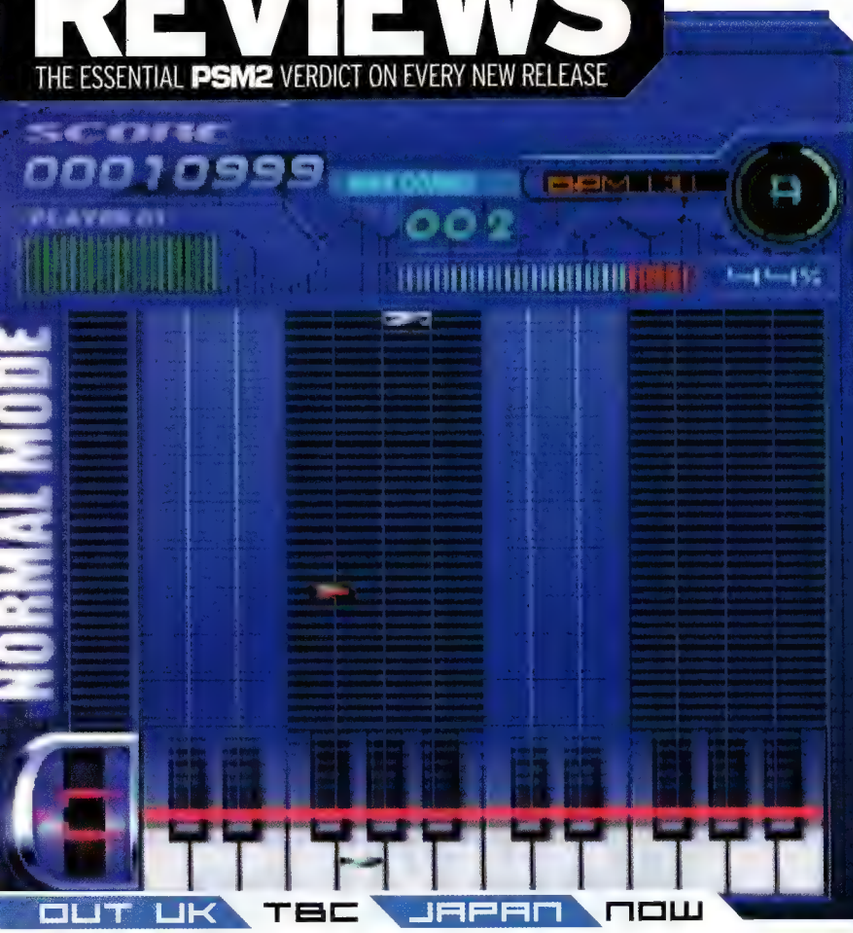


SONGS IN THE KEY OF STRIFE
Combos consist of maintaining accuracy over consecutive notes... it's that hard.

INFO
- **DEVELOPER** Konami
- **PUBLISHER** Konami
- **GAME TYPE** Bemani
- **PRICE** ¥6,800
- **ESSENTIALS** 1-2 Players

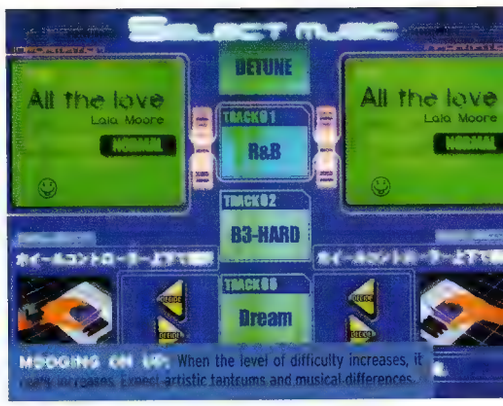
DETAILS
- Compatible with a keyboard peripheral.
- Free mode to go jammin' in.
- 25 styles of music, including A.O.R'N'BASS and Goa Trance.

Advice on how to play is in Japanese but the game is pretty self-explanatory. No real problems.

OUT UK TBC **JAPAN** NOW

KEYBOARDMANIA

Want to be the 'interesting' part of the Bemani band and stand behind a synth showing-off your king-size mullet? Now you can... If you really want to. **REVIEWER:** Pete Wilton



Bemani games aren't just big in Japan – they're huge. Like karaoke they have become a way of life, and you can't go into any self-respecting Tokyo arcade without seeing ordinary men and women shovelling in money to dance, drum and air guitar.

Like Sumo and Manga videos, however, without this pre-existing fan base it's hard to see Bemani PS2 games going stellar over here. On the evidence of Konami's latest offering, *KeyboardMania*, things aren't going to shift radically, unless a generation of parents seize an ideal opportunity to sneak piano lessons into their little cherub's hectic gaming regime.

As in *DrumMania* the idea is a simple one: contact with a peripheral must be timed to coincide with a series of note icons scrolling down the screen. In this case you need to buy a two-octave, full-sized keyboard peripheral (don't even try playing with a standard controller) that's no Steinway, but feels nicely weighted.

IVORY COACHING

Choose the Training mode and you'll be asked to play along to a wailing Stevie Wonder sound-a-like. You steel yourself for the barrage of notes and... Christ, down they come in melodious runs and ascending scales. This isn't like being in Robert Miles' backing band – you'll need more than one finger. Round about then is when the first obstacle to becoming a *KeyboardMania* master slaps you rudely across the face – the keyboard itself, and being able to play it. You might think that *DrumMania*'s six drum pads might make it hard to follow, but *KeyboardMania* has 24 possible keys to hit – that's 23 wrong notes you can play by not being able to match up the icons on-screen to your ham-fisted stabs at the keyboard. Scoring's the same as in *DrumMania*, with accuracy rewarded by new levels and failure ensuring your new game ends up in the attic.

TRICKY DISCO

Rather than being a *Parappa*-ish, forgiving kind of music game *KeyboardMania* aims for the serious end of the market and in so doing manages to be dead hard. If you learned the piano as a nipper it might be easier, but as you have to recreate the melody there's little margin for error. Practice and more practice is required to make it through the latter stages, and as you fail for the umpteenth on a criminally cheesy piece of J-pop you do wonder: "Am I really having fun yet?" Here lies both its saving and downfall. The difficulty may discourage some, while the level of perseverance might encourage those who'd never considered an instrument before. **PSM2**

A UK release for this looks very shaky.

INSIGHT

In the original arcade cabinet the two-octave keyboard is actually as wide as the on-screen display so that the notes and icons line-up – which makes following the tune that little bit more manageable.

LIBERACE'S CHOICE

1. **DRUMMANIA** Keep the beat by hitting pads with sticks. This is silly, but fun and addictive.
2. **KEYBOARDMANIA** Not as instantly accessible as *DrumMania* - it offers more depth if you're persistent.
3. **STEPPING SELECTION** Hit me baby one more time and I'll smash this mat over your head. Simplistic stepping.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Complex melody making.
- Often frustratingly harsh

GRAPHICS
+ Animations you won't be watching.
- Dull notes speeding downwards.

SOUND
+ Jam in the Free mode.
- Extremely naff tunes to endure.

LIFESPAN
+ Hard enough to last you a while.
- Annoying enough to make you quit.

OVERALL
What, you have to be able to play an instrument to be a pop star? No fair! Right, knickers off and onto the cover of FHM with you.

63

DEMANDING

OUT UK TBC JAPAN NOW

G-SAVIOUR

What's he going to save us from? Repetitive blasting? Terrible targeting? Stupid bosses? Ah. No.

REVIEWER: Pete Wilton

GREY, SHITTY ROLLERS: You'll pile through the levels in no time, resistance isn't futile... it's non-existent.

INFO

- **DEVELOPER** Sunrise Interactive
- **PUBLISHER** Sunrise Interactive
- **GAME TYPE** Mech Combat
- **PRICE** ¥6,800
- **ESSENTIALS** 1 Player, DualShock 2 Analogue, Memory Card compatible.

DETAILS

- Alternate battle suits with different secondary weapons (cannon/missile).
- Unlockable playable mechs such as the J-Saviour and G-3 Saviour.

the in-depth briefing text may remain a mystery but it's irrelevant. Simply kill everything – fast.

Sometimes a game can be summed up in a single moment. For *Tekken* it's punching an opponent into the middle of the next screen, for *Ridge 5* it's powersliding within a hair's breadth of the kerb, but for *G-Saviour* it's getting a boss in a corner and continuously blasting him until he dies without once returning fire. Not, like the other two, a magic moment then.

On PSone, mech games advanced from the freeform 3D-blasting of *Krazy Ivan* to the strategic combat of *MechWarrior 2*. *G-Saviour* is a throwback to a more arcade-style battle suit bust-up, as you're channelled through a set route with turrets, mines and enemy mechs blocking your way forward. Time to warm-up your laser then, and get busy with those missiles, you might think. The trouble is, hitting a rendered barn door would even prove tricky due to the awful targeting system. While enemy mechs – with better weapons computers, but one-hit armour made out of rice paper – can shoot you from miles off, your red auto-aim box doesn't come up until you're at close quarters.

Worse than this though, is that you can look anywhere but you can't *shoot* anywhere – unless distant targets are on the same level as you, your laser bolts fizz harmlessly into the ground until the auto-aim can be bothered to lock on.

SHOVED UP ITS PAST

If *G-Saviour* plays like it's from the class of 1995 then its graphics aren't exactly an anti-ageing cosmetic miracle. The dull grey and brown landscapes, repetitive textures and unimpressive explosions are hardly going to make you leap from the sofa and prostrate yourself before the retina-stabbing visuals that only PS2 can deliver. To be frank, if you told someone that *G-Saviour* was running on PSone they'd be more likely to agree and wander off to the kitchen, than stand back in amazement..

If enemy mechs were fewer, but harder to kill, or static defences more of an obstacle, then the mindless blasting might be reasonable fun. Unfortunately, the endless stupid adversaries make it more of a chore than a pleasure. About the only real thrill is powering up the hover or roller mode so that you can zoom through a level. Maybe they should have ramped up the graphics and made this an on-rails shooter or a modern day *Space Harrier*, because as it is, *G-Saviour* is deathly dull. **PSM2**

No one's picked up the rights for UK release.

BENDER'S CHOICE

1. **ZOE** If you're after a mech-on-mech tussle then this is the title to hang on for. Glorious battling.
2. **GUN GRIFFON BLAZE** Upcoming arcade suit-em-up that focuses on pretty explosions and lashings of action.
3. **AMOURED CORE 2** Better looking than *G-Saviour* this is still slow and clumsy. Avoid.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Run around in a tin suit blasting everything
- Dull levels and enemies, rubbish auto-aiming.

GRAPHICS
+ Large special attacks, things exploding
- Dingy levels and textures, nothing big and flash.

SOUND
+ Nice fwooshing sound as you hover about
- No big THWOOM!s to rattle your ear canals.

LIFESPAN
+ Roller about for a good five minutes.
- Too predictable and too repetitive to last.

OVERALL
The mighty clash of mechs should be exciting, but severe tactical malfunctions ensure this is just so much scrap.

39

CANNED FEET

LAST ISSUE'S REVIEWS

Accurate and honest – the games we reviewed last issue... **SCORE**

ARMOURED CORE 2 — 52
Although it features some well rendered mechs, with a solid game engine, this is a promising title spoilt by the Godzilla mentality – height and might coming before speed, playability and multi-paced action.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2 — 77
Fast-paced slashing action which is graphically impressive with excellent game structure. This is all lightly hampered by some shocking fogging though, and a lack of imagination in its execution. Still, suggests a bright future for tactical ultra-violence.

ETERNAL RING — 35
Very much a run-of-the-mill dungeons and goblins plot that creaks along at an unengaging pace. *Eternal Ring* is an uninspired import RPG that will remain awkward until the speed – or lack of it – and its other shortcomings are addressed, before its UK release.

GRADIUS 3 & 4 — 29
A bog-standard, but arcade-perfect conversion of a dull, ageing shoot-em-up. Its cut-scenes are impressive, but the in-game graphics are strictly for the old-skool. This is not what we had in mind for PS2. Arse.

JIKKYOU WORLD SOCCER — 81
Not the best football game ever, but settles for great playability and the odd touch of genuine class without rewriting the rule book. Currently the undisputed king of PS2 footie titles (see pg86, PSM2#02).

SURFROID — 47
A clever clip-on surfboard-to-Analogue peripheral and a reasonable game brought to a horrible, screeching halt by some unbelievably slow loading and limited appeal.

TVDJ — 22
Bravely original idea, albeit joyless to play and therefore hopelessly reliant on some weak, animated action. The intended effect is of a DJ scratching-style visual experience rather than an actual cartoon, but it doesn't work.

X FIRE — 56
Average in almost every respect, *X Fire* is a competent enough sneak-em-up but one almost entirely lacking in innovation. Visually it's unremarkable and has been done better elsewhere.

THE SILVER LINING

So there haven't been many high-scoring games this month, right? Well, don't panic. That's partly because PSM2 rates games harder than most games mags. There are some fantastic titles lined up for PS2 in the UK – just look at *SSX* this issue – and the countdown to day one has begun.

PRICE CONVERTER

Where game prices are listed in Yen, visit the link below for a direct currency conversion. Bear in mind, though, that this is the price you'd pay in Japan – expect to pay between 50-70 quid for most PS2 games through reputable UK importers.

http://www.xe.net/currency/full/

FAST FACTS ABOUT DVD VIDEO

1 DVD stands for Digital Versatile Disc.
2 A DVD disc offers double the picture resolution of VHS – 500 line as opposed to 250 lines.
3 DVD delivers widescreen, so no more nasty panned and scanned film transfers.
4 DVD reproduces DTS and Dolby Digital surround sound at cinema sound quality.
5 DVD discs can't suffer a loss of quality from numerous viewings.
6 DVD players will also play CDs and Video-CDs.
7 DVD players in the UK play Region Two discs. US Imports are Region One. Annoyingly.

OUT UK 6 NOVEMBER

CUT AND DRIED: Great film, superb extras – and who's going to argue with punchy Brad?

FIGHT CLUB

Oi, geezer – come and have a go if you think Brad's hard enough...

REVIEWER: Dan Jolin

STARRING Brad Pitt, Edward Norton, Helena Bonham Carter, Meat Loaf, Jared Leto
DIRECTOR David Fincher
CERTIFICATE 18
PRICE £24.99

The first rule of *Fight Club*: you have to buy *Fight Club*. The second rule of *Fight Club*: you *have* to buy *Fight Club*. If any single, movie-laden circle of silver deserves to be shoved into your PS2 this year, it's this one. OK, so the *Men in Black* DVD's stuffed with more extras than the sky has stars, but for a perfect balance of style and content, *Fight Club* KO's *MIB* in the first round.

BOXING CLEVER

You shouldn't judge a disc by its cover, but with its super-slick, 'paper-bag' slipcase and deliciously psychedelic, fold-out double-disc pack, this package screams quality. Disc one treats you to the movie, plus a superb commentary from director David Fincher, Brad Pitt, Ed Norton and Helena Bonham Carter.

Disc two, meanwhile, is entirely devoted to the extras, including 17 behind-the-scenes vignettes, which enable you to use the multi-angle function to flit between different set-ups, plus six deleted scenes – including a post-coital line of dialogue from Helena Bonham Carter that was deemed too tasteless for the final cut.

HATE MAIL

Yet none of this would mean anything if the movie itself didn't have all the punch of an army of Tysons. The tale of insomniac office worker Ed Norton, his rejection of Ikea-obsessed consumerism, his friendship with anarchic mystery man Tyler Durden (Brad Pitt) and the founding of *Fight Club* – where men pummel each other in organised bare-knuckle bouts – was perhaps the best way for cinema to see out the '90s.

And, like most bold films, it upset the tabloids. "This film brutalises men everywhere!" screamed The Daily Mail, while a few critics even hysterically labelled it as "fascist". Sadly, also like most bold films, it failed to make much of an impact on the box-office, and only won an Oscar for its sound-effects editing.

DOUBLE WHAMMY

Fight Club has rightly been hailed as one of the most important movies of the last decade. Director Fincher pulls out the stops, weaving together amazing CG-effects and breathtaking camera whirls. A sludgy, funky grit-hop soundtrack from The Dust Brothers complements the visuals perfectly, while the script keeps the action firmly within the boundaries of black comedy, despite all the beatings and blood.

Norton's portrayal of a man sinking from a life of superficiality into a world of broken teeth and anti-consumerist terrorism is nothing less than engaging. Pitt, meanwhile, merely reprises the slightly unhinged flash-guy persona he's honed so well, but that only makes him a better foil for his on-screen partner.

Few DVDs are genuinely *essential* but, trust us, this one really is. Knock yourself out by slapping it in your collection. **PSM2**

INSIGHT

- Among the movie's many subliminal images are four half-second-long flashes of Tyler Durden, before he makes his entrance.
- The original script used real recipes for home-made explosives – these were replaced with dud ones in the interest of public safety.
- Three detectives in the film are named Detective Andrew, Detective Kevin, and Detective Walker – after *Se7en* scripter Andrew Kevin Walker.

BRUISER'S CHOICE

1 **FIGHT CLUB** They don't come harder, faster, smarter or funnier.
2 **RAGING BULL** Coming up on DVD later in November... De Niro's bleak, sleek boxing epic.
3 **ROCKY** The *original* boxing movie – it ain't aged too well, but it's still Sly's best.

PSM2 VERDICT

EXTRAS

Commentary track Cast and crew biographies Behind-the-scenes clips Visual-effects vignettes Six deleted scenes, with optional commentary This Is Your Life music video Stills gallery – including rarely seen publicity shots Theatrical trailers and press kit Edward Norton's "Yale interview" Five internet spots and ad spots Two "public service announcements" Original artwork from the film, including pre-production paintings

OVERALL

More discs are coming in double-packs with tons of extras, but few contain movies as amazing as this. *Fight Club* can't be beat.

98

PRIZE-WINNING

Kobal Collection/20th Century Fox

OUT UK NOW

JURASSIC PARK & THE LOST WORLD

Not so much *Walking With Dinosaurs* as running away from them....

REVIEWER: Dan Jolin

STARRING ..... Jeff Goldblum, Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Julianne Moore, Samuel L Jackson, Bob Peck, Pete Postlethwaite
DIRECTOR ..... Steven Spielberg
CERTIFICATE ..... PG
PRICE £34.99

While his beardy buddy George Lucas is still refusing to let the *Star Wars* movies go anywhere near DVD, Spielberg has already released *Jaws* into the pool (see PSM2#01), and now it's the turn of his man-munching dinos to wreak havoc on the digital format. And, while *Jaws* is undoubtedly the superior movie, this *Jurassic Park/Lost World* combo is certainly more impressive in terms of supplements.

INSIGHT

- Spielberg didn't finish *Jurassic Park* himself – he moved straight onto shooting *Schindler's List*, and handed the post-production work over to George Lucas.
- A San Diego video store featured during the T-Rex rampage in *The Lost World* features a poster with Arnold Schwarzenegger playing Richard III!

DIGI-DINOS

The two hours' worth of Making Of-docs merely highlight what a ground-breaking movie *Jurassic Park* was in terms of making film-makers stand up and notice the vast potential of computer graphics technology. Previously, James Cameron had introduced the world to the joys of morphing through the liquid-metal monsterism of *Terminator 2*, but this was little more than an elaboration on his effects-work in box-office bomb *The Abyss*. It wasn't until *Jurassic* that we saw living, breathing creatures with photo-realistic movement and skin-texture off charging around our big screens.

Of course, the effects would mean absolutely nothing if there wasn't strong enough storytelling to support them, as the lamentable *Lost World* proved – and this is the downside to this otherwise attractive package. Despite the presence of a few expertly constructed set-pieces, *Jurassic's* sequel is ill-conceived and preposterously plotted.

LIZARD KINGS

However, if you've not yet been worn down by repeated Christmas viewings, and you fancy witnessing T-Rex roaring with ultra-crisp screen-quality, then there's still much to recommend the original dino-flinger. Okay, so the requisite kiddies become a bit tiresome, but once they're in that kitchen with the ravenous raptors on the stalk, it becomes easy to forget the irritating cuteness that characterised their introduction.

DINO CRISIS: The original was stunning and fun, the sequel was toss.

Just as Spielberg proved so adept at capitalising on the audience's fear of attack from the depths of the ocean in *Jaws*, here he goes to town on the fun-shock value of dinos that can sneak around a building rather than simply stomp it into rubble.

So while *The Lost World* is indisputably arse, you can't deny the quality of *Jurassic Park* – and, if you really object to shelling out £35 for both, you can always pick up *Jurassic Park* on its own for £19.99. **PSM2**

DINOSAUR'S CHOICE

1 **JURASSIC PARK**
Big dinos, small dinos, dinos that spit acid at fat blokes... Easily the top monster disc.

2 **DINOSAUR**
Talking dinos struggle for survival, Disney-style. Expect it soon on DVD.

PSM2 VERDICT

EXTRAS
Making Of *Jurassic Park* and *Lost World* features ☐ Pre-production meeting feature ☐ Deleted scenes ☐ Production photos ☐ Trailers ☐ Dinosaur Encyclopedia ☐ Production notes and biogs

OVERALL
A generous amount of extras, and a good first movie, but *The Lost World* stinks worse than a dino-sized pile of T-Rex crap.

70
HALF-BAKED

MAGNOLIA DOUBLE DISC SET

OUT UK NOW

STARRING ..... John C Rielly, Tom Cruise, Phillip Seymour Hoffman, Phillip Baker Hall, Julianne Moore, William H Macy, Jason Robards
DIRECTOR ..... PT Anderson
CERTIFICATE 18
PRICE £19.99

It's hardly surprising that *Magnolia*, a three-hour, multi-stranded tale of LA folk, should be compared with Robert Altman's *Short Cuts*. Yet *Magnolia* is far more intriguing and adventurous.

The introduction, which highlights a set of bizarre, real-life coincidences, sets the tone. So we've got Tom Cruise's misogynist pick-up artist whose alienated father (Jason Robards) is dying of cancer, whose TV quiz show is hosted by an ailing Philip Baker Hall... You get the idea.

It's engaging, enthralling and packed with impeccable performances. And, with a quality double-disc package, you've got one of the year's best movies on DVD. **90** **PSM2**

THE GREEN MILE

OUT UK NOW

STARRING ..... Tom Hanks, Michael Clarke Duncan
DIRECTOR ..... Frank Darabont
CERTIFICATE 18
PRICE £19.99

With its 190-minute running time and careful, ponderous pace, you'd think that *The Green Mile* would certainly prove a long-haul for even the most dedicated of Hankophiles.

However, Hanks excels in the lead as Paul Edgecomb, the prison warden who runs Cold Mountain Penitentiary's Death Row in '30s Louisiana. But the smooth running of his unit is disrupted when gentle giant John Coffey (Michael Clarke Duncan) arrives on the Mile and reveals mysterious healing powers.

This is old-fashioned movie making at its best, dispensing with flashy camerawork and focusing instead on solid acting and thoughtful characterisation. But don't think it's devoid of thrills – one horrific execution scene is literally electrifying. **83** **PSM2**

ALSO RELEASED

THE INSIDER
Released Out Now **Cert** 15 **Price** £19.99
Michael Mann gives the tobacco industry a ticking off in this sharp, based-on-fact drama which features ex-*Gladiator* Russell Crowe. **86** **PSM2**

THE HURRICANE
Released Out Now **Cert** 15 **Price** £19.99
Veteran helmer Norman Jewison pics the not-quite-accurate bio of imprisoned coulda-been boxing champ Rubin Carter. **78** **PSM2**

AMERICAN PSYCHO
Released Out Now **Cert** 18 **Price** £19.99
An intelligent adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis' 'unfilmable' novel which plays up the humour and '80s-ripping satire. **82** **PSM2**

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE
Released Out Now **Cert** 18 **Price** £19.99
Kubrick's most controversial film hits the retail shelves, both in disc and cassette form. It's not aged too well, but it remains a powerful work. **91** **PSM2**

INTRODUCING...
Dan Jolin is Reviews Editor on Total Film the magazine for people who love reading about movies as much as going to see them. The mag's packed with the latest Hollywood news, interviews and more, and is in the shops now...
www.totalfilm.co.uk

COMING SOON

RAGING BULL (18)
20 November
£19.99

SPAGHETTI WESTERNS BOX SET (18)
13 November
£49.99

TOY STORY (U) COLLECTOR'S EDITION
27 November
£49.99

Kobal Collection/Universal/Amblin
Kobal Collection/Sol. Peter/New Line Cinema ■ Kobal Collection/Nelson, Ralph Jr/Castle Rock/Warner Bros

Sub-machine music
The sheer number of Nazi soldiers requires some serious firepower.

OUT UK NOW

MEDAL OF HONOR: UNDERGROUND

Resistance is futile! But not if you happen to be squeezed inside the French Knickers of Mademoiselle Baptiste...

REVIEWER: Jonnie Bryant

DEVELOPER	Dreamworks Interactive
PUBLISHER	Electronic Arts
PLAYERS	1-2
PRICE	£29.99
ESSENTIALS	DualShock, Memory Card

Will this blasted war never end? Let's hope not when there're cracking titles like *Medal of Honor: Underground* still kicking Adolph's goons in their leder hosen-clad asses. Yes, it's back to the big ol' WW2 for more Nazi killing antics behind enemy lines.

However, some things have altered drastically since your last operation against the evil goose-steppers and their V2s. This time round you play a female member of the French resistance (Manon Baptiste) who initially finds herself lobbing petrol bombs in the dark back streets of gay Paris. Before you can say "sacre bleau!" in a suitable husky whisper, you're laying explosives, launching rocket attacks against Panzer divisions and tackling Rommel's Africa Korps while disguised as a photographer

As with its predecessor, this is high adventure that's heavy on the gunplay and light on strategy, which you'd think would be to the detriment of the game. Fortunately, this turns out to not be the case. Each, admittedly linear, mission is a nail-biting scramble from A to B that packs a Howitzer load of tension into every step.

Drop your guard for an instant and sharp enemy AI – which sees the Master Race ducking and rolling for cover or legging it for reinforcements – will soon have you back-tracking for missed medi-packs.

"BEFORE YOU CAN SAY 'SACRE BLEAU!', YOU'RE TACKLING ROMMEL WHILE DISGUISED AS A PHOTOGRAPHER"

That said, not everything is stacked against you as now there are a few friendly faces that accompany your character on specific missions.

NAZI NICK

There's also the welcome return of the multi-player Deathmatch that, despite its clunky graphics, still manages to crack a smile with some bizarre, playable characters, a cluster of small but perfectly formed levels and tasty selection of weapons. The statistic page and medal box also reappear to goad you on to greater heroics, but the combination of all these bonus elements does little to extend the replay value that provides thrills in sharp doses. Disappointingly though, this tails off after a victory or two. *Underground* is indeed munchkin short.

But if you still haven't had enough of stomping the Third Reich, get this in and enjoy a week's worth of action that'd make General de Gaulle proud. **PSM2**

INSIGHT

- Michael Giacchino, who composed the fantastic music for the original, returns with a handful of belting tunes that really set the scene.
- Some of you who have blown your way through the original game may recognise Manon – she was Jimmy Paterson's contact with the French resistance.

PARTISAN'S CHOICE

1 **MEDAL OF HONOUR**
The original received a mixed reception form the games press but sold by the truck load. So will this.

2 **QUAKE**
Still the best first-person shoot-em-up on the PlayStation bar none, especially when played using the PS mouse.

3 **ALIEN RESURRECTION**
Different eras, but a similar combination of tension and gunplay.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Fast and effective with some totally addictive pacing.
- Levels involve little more than item location and shooting Jerry.

GRAPHICS
+ Suitably dark and moody with some cool pyrotechnics.
- A bit clunky and the redraw distance is seriously short.

SOUND
+ The score is top notch and really sucks you into the game's world.
- The character dialogue can be a bit repetitive at times.

LIFESPAN
+ The multi-player and secret characters give this legs.
- The one-player game will only tax you if you're a perfectionist.

OVERALL
Fans of the original title should snap this up as soon as it hits the shelves, but newcomers be warned: it's an acquired taste.

80

STORMING

OUT UK NOVEMBER

SPYRO: YEAR OF THE DRAGON

"I know you don't really wanna... unleash the dragon," sang Sisqo. Did Sony take any notice? Did they 'eck...

REVIEWER: Jonnie Bryant

DEVELOPER Insomniac Games
PUBLISHER SCEE
PLAYERS 1
PRICE £29.99
ESSENTIALS DualShock, Memory Card

Old death-breath is back for his third outing and he's as hyperactive and bouncy as ever. Little has changed here since *Spyro 2*, with Insomniac Games rolling out all the usual suspects that have guaranteed the series' phenomenal success over the years. Cue sickly colours, ickle cutsey characters and a plot that'll have you overdosing on cloying fluff.

NEW CREW

Additions have been made to the winning, free-roaming, 3D formula, though. Now you no longer find yourself alone in your quest to rescue the dragon eggs swiped by a sorceress called Bianca (not modelled on Patsy Palmer, thankfully). This time round Spyro has three companions who add their own exotic talents to the mix. There's Shelia the Kangaroo (who bizarrely lives in an Alpine village), Bentley the Yeti, Sergeant Byrd the Penguin and – our personal favourite – Agent 9: Space Monkey.

Apart from these new faces, everything else is pretty much unchanged. The scaled sheep-worrier still has all the usual moves – although water no longer seems to be as lethal as it once was – and is still protected from damage by his constant sidekick, Spax the Dragonfly.

EDDIE LIZARD

But there are a few surprises awaiting the *Spyro* 'veteran' (average age 10), which arrive in the form of the mini-games. During these, Spyro and his friends get to skateboard, drive tanks and even taste the thrills of first-person shoot-em-ups – Spax's weapon laden mini-game is a joy.

There is a down side to all this sickeningly-sweet fun though. The game seems to have been targeted at an even younger audience, meaning that there's ultimately not a great deal of challenge to be had here.

Yes, there are still moments of intense frustration where instant death lies at the bottom of a mistimed jump, but anyone familiar with the game's engine will soon see the levels rattling away at a frightening pace.

Ultimately, *Spyro: Year of the Dragon* is solid stuff, that still moves at a good pace against the super-cute backgrounds and plot – it'll wring your cute glands dry. But despite some new, reasonably entertaining characters, the lack of any real innovation from the previous two leaves you feeling unsatisfied. **PSM2**

"THE GAME SEEMS TO BE TARGETED AT AN EVEN YOUNGER AUDIENCE"

ANOTHER SERIES DRAGS-ON: Spyro and Spax take on a technicolour terror. This is about as terrifying as it gets...

INSIGHT

Stewart Copeland, drummer from The Police, wrote the music for the original *Spyro* game. Oh, how the great have fallen... Mind you, compared to some of the dreadful toss Sting has churned out over the years, he might have been the lucky one.

ST GEORGE'S CHOICE

1 **APE ESCAPE**
Still one of the most inventive platformers around on PlayStation and it's got more madcap apes than all the *Spyros* put together.

2 **CRASH BANDICOOT 3**
Despite its pseudo 3D gameplay, *Crash* still fills the cheap seats with his massive sub-levels.

3 **SPYRO 3**
Year of the Dragon lags behind through a lack of challenges.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ More racey than a bionic cheetah. The levels simply scream by.
- There's no real challenge here.

GRAPHICS
+ A lesson in the seamless stitching of polygons
- Like your games dark and moody? Give this a miss.

SOUND
+ All the characters have suitable barmy lines to deliver.
- Not a single bar of *Walking on the Moon* to be heard.

LIFESPAN
+ The multi-layered mini games will stretch this one out.
- Once completed, there's no real reason to return.

OVERALL
Repetitive with the odd flourish of genius. Fantastic to look at but in desperate need of some PS2 magic to re-stoke the purple one's boiler.

69

FLAMMABLE

PRINCE NASEEM BOXING

OUT UK NOVEMBER

DEVELOPER Codemasters
PUBLISHER Codemasters
PLAYERS 1-2
ESSENTIALS DualShock, Memory Card

Plagued by revised release schedules for the last two years, this punchy little title backs flips in to a ring and... gets itself a pounding.

OK, so the action may be pretty realistic, and it has got the celebrity appeal of Naz backing it up, but everything still remains lacklustre and dull. The various modes do offer a wide selection of playing styles that take in training, showcase bouts and a career ladder but, once inside the ring, everything drops down a gear.

Fights consist of selecting a decent defence tactic and then pounding your opponent with hooks until they bite the canvas, and that – ladeez and gentleman – is pretty much it. PSM2 recommends you save your cash and go for something with more clout, like *Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2*. **PSM2** **56**

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2

OUT UK NOVEMBER

DEVELOPER Sony Europe
PUBLISHER Sony
PLAYERS 1-2
ESSENTIALS DualShock, Memory Card

There's no doubting it – all footy titles still live in the shadow of Konami's *ISS* series. Fact. But there are a licensed few that try to come at things from a different angel and surprise the Japanese defence with the odd bit of flare.

This is Football 2 still isn't as fluid as any of the *ISS* titles. Behind the scenes there are some nice little touches – there's a full team edit option, some tasty training videos plus all the correct names and faces from the 2000 season. You can also pre-programme specialist strategies before the match and then call upon them for set pieces. All impressive stuff. However, on the pitch the players move at a dependable rather than exciting pace.

Good, but the Japanese have still got the upper hand. **PSM2** **69**

ALSO RELEASED

DIGIMON WORLD

Publisher Bandai **Developer** Bandai
Price £29.99

Shamefully derivative cash-in on the *Pokémon* phenomenon (although *Digimon* have been around for longer in Japan) that brings mini-monster scraps to PlayStation. There's a suitable cute lead character, TK, searching for the lost Digimon of File City. You wander around a bit, train up your monsters, wipe their arses for them (literally) and fight. If you like that kind of thing, this'll press your nurturing buttons. **PSM2** **61**

INCREDIBLE CRISIS

Publisher Titus **Developer** Polygon Magic
Price £19.99

After *Bishi Bashi* comes another contender into the lunatic mini-game arena. Unlike the earlier title though, this does have some kind of structure as you follow the central character, Taneo, through the worst day of his life. It doesn't get weirder or more enjoyable than this. Inspirational madness. **PSM2** **78**

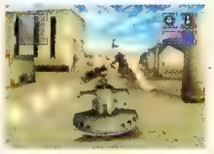
JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY

Publisher Ubisoft **Developer** Disney Interactive
Price £29.99

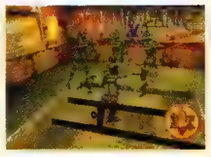
Mowgli, Baloo and Baghera get down with the wicked and strut their disco stuff in this latest dance title from Disney. In true *Dance Dance Revolution* style, the classic tunes have received an updated remix and everything boogies along at an entertaining rate. The necessary investment in a dance mat to get the most out of this might put some people off, but it's still a decent blast of shuffling fun. **PSM2** **78**

COMING SOON

CRASH BASH
The bandicoot returns for some mini-game 'madness'. Looks OK,this.



STAR WARS DEMOLITION
***Twisted Metal*, set in the Star Wars universe!**



THE MUMMY
***Tomb Raider*-esque movie-based adventure.**

REVIEWS

THE ESSENTIAL **PSM2** VERDICT ON EVERY NEW RELEASE

REVIEWS NEXT ISSUE:

PSM2'S TIMESPLITTERS JUDGEMENT

Essential reviews of every UK PS2 launch game. Are the PAL versions of *Tekken Tag Tournament* and *Ridge Racer 5* better than the NTSC ones? We tell you. Plus every Japanese import that you *have* to know about.

FOR TIMESPLITTERS, WE LET YOU KNOW:

- How intense its Deathmatch is
- If the level creator is really *that* good

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- Bust-A-Move Dance Summit 2001

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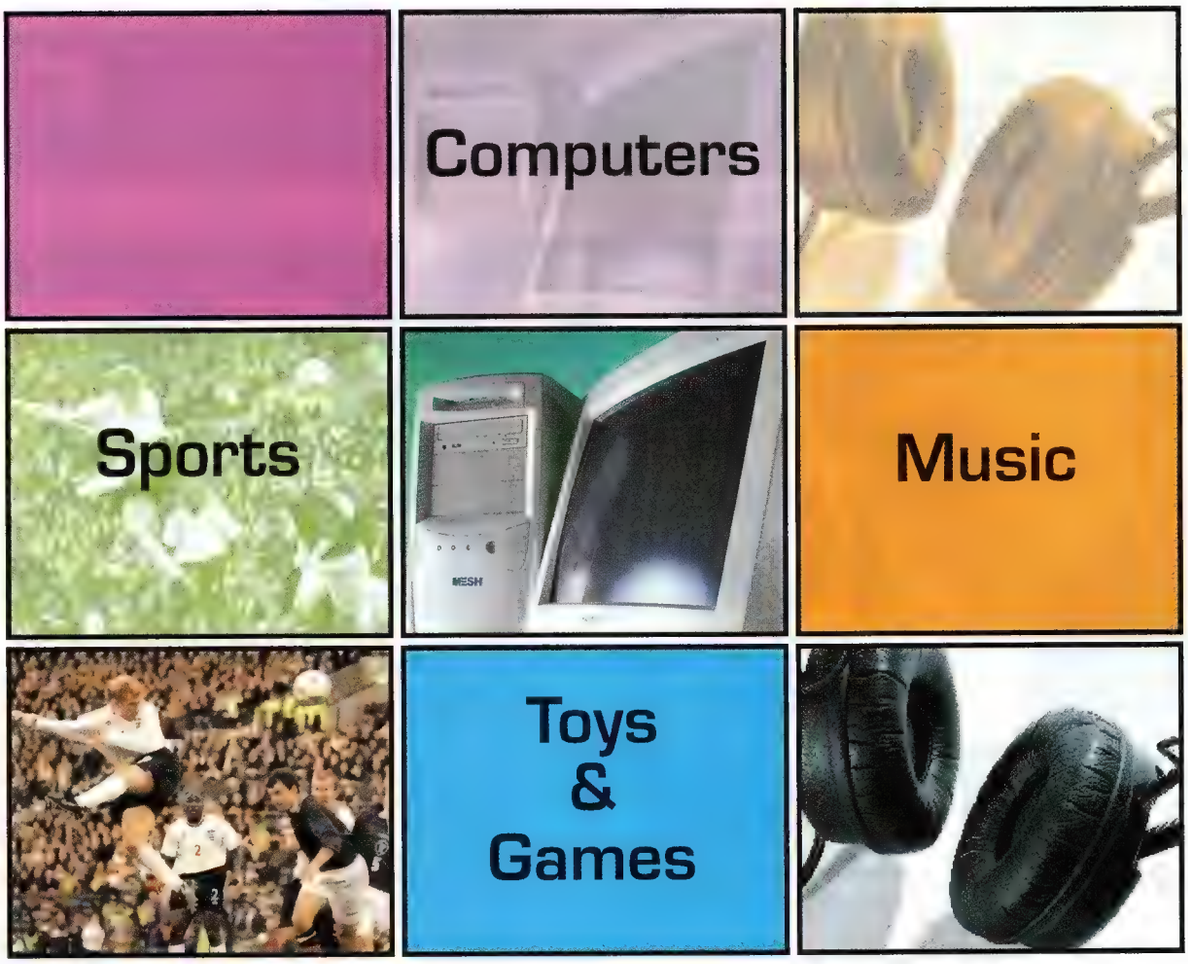

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PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
PSM2
PRO TIPS
TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PLAYSTATION 2
タテイスカンチニシミモ
ヒナ

SFEX3 TIPS フハフヌキニラ

STREET FIGHTER EX3

Disarm your enemies with your witty conversational skills. Or smack them. No, just smack them.

DESPITE MY OUTWARDLY PLACID APPEARANCE,

it's down to business this month. As launch looms on the horizon, those social-status-defining games have started to surface – the ones that reward mastery with peer-group respect, pub anecdotes and adoration from members of the opposite sex (maybe). Games that demand you stay up late on a caffeine drip-feed to shave those precious seconds off your time. This month, then, our *Tekken* guide gets serious. After showing you all the secrets, it's time to get down to the serious business of punching people's lights out, of floating like a butterfly, then snapping some poor bugger's arm like a twig

Elsewhere, we start a pyrotechnic car-park ruckus with *SFEX3*'s most difficult manoeuvres, while there's obsessive website action aplenty to convince you that, in the world of gaming, you're actually fairly *normal*.

Now go, and come back next month, when you've bought *SSX* and want us to show you how it's done...

This month, we're continuing our master class in interpersonal violence. The *Tekken* extravaganza is a scant few pages away, but first – a salute to the father of all fighting games. It may be showing its age, but the new incarnation's still got a few new tricks to show the youngsters.

GET EMOTIONAL

If your partner is knocked out, you'll inherit what's left of his Meteo gauge – the vaunted Emotional Flow system. This means that you can use up to six bars' worth of Meteo energy at a go – a sudden flurry which can easily catch your opponent off guard.

SET TO STUN

Hit both light attack buttons together for the new stun attack. Unlike earlier *SFEX* games it won't drain your Meteo gauge, but it won't affect a blocking opponent either. It's reasonably fast, though, and will leave an unwary opponent open to a vicious pounding.

DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY

Meteo combos might look very pretty, but aren't actually that effective – they're reasonably easy to block, and drain your entire Meteo gauge at one fell swoop. If you're running at full power, try linking your standard super attacks together – for instance, D Dark can launch into his Death Trap move immediately after the Knife Flurry. It's completely unblockable if it hits, and you can conserve your Meteo gauge if it doesn't. Oh, and your character will glow yellow or red instead of the more usual blue if you've pulled it off.

DON'T STOP

Against an experienced opponent, it simply isn't enough to fire off a super attack and hope it hits – they'll block as soon as the screen freezes. There are two ways around this. The first is to work the attack into a sequence – try Ryu's uppercut-fireball combo, *immediately* followed by another

KNEE-LY THERE: Sagat making up for what he lacks in social skills by kneeing someone into orbit.

HATE BALLS OF FIRE: Sakura's super-hadoken is devastating if it hits, but it probably won't.

fireball to get an eight-hit super-hadoken. The second is to make it unblockable – for instance, start entering the commands for Skullomania's Skullo Dream while you're jumping towards another character. You'll launch into it as soon as you land, and it can't be stopped.

TIME YOUR TAGGING

Unlike *DOA2* and *Tekken*, you can't simply repeatedly tag – for a few seconds after each changeover, you're on your own. On the other hand, it's also possible to unleash a truly vicious volley of attacks on your opponent – a good example is tagging, then immediately doing a flying kick with your departing character. If you follow up with a well-timed sweep from your second fighter, it's literally impossible to block both.

PSM2 TOP TIP! If you missed our moves list in PSM2#01, experiment with many combinations and all three punches to find Melee combos.

FOOT AND MOUTH: If Gerald had any sense, this would be the time to block.

MIDNIGHT CLUB

Planning on buying a free-roaming car game with a hint of criminality about it? 'GIVE ALL YOUR MONEY TO US', seems to be the message from Angel Studios. As an incentive to buy both of their efforts, they've included a cheat that lets you save a car you've accessed in *Midnight Club*. *Smuggler's* Buggy handles like a dream and tends to be a bit nippier than *Midnight's* usual Caddies, but a word of warning – tip it over and you're out of the race, just like in real life. Oh, and disappointingly, you can't do it the other way round and play Smokey and the Bandit in a double-decker bus.

NIGHT CLUBBING: Not as innocuous as a yellow taxicab for illegal street-racing, though.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

If you read our last issue, you'll know that it's possible to access hidden characters by playing through the Musou mode with different dynasties. But why give yourself that sense of satisfaction? Just enter these codes on the title screen.

ALL SHU GENERALS

Press ▢, R1 five times and R2 five times to unlock all Shu Generals.

EDIT MODE

This will enable you to access and play the fabulous cut-scenes.
Press L1, L2, R2, R1, L1, L2, R2, R1.

PSM2 TOP TIP! Try playing as bearded wonder Huang Zhong. His Musou attacks are the best ranga in the game.

IT'S A CHOPPER, BABY: You can even play as the simpering, Ming-bearded bosses.

OBSESSION FOR MEN

Last month we gave you a gentle nudge in the direction of those Jack-of-all-trades cheat sites out there, but now it's time to plumb the depths of gaming obsession – to learn from, and occasionally laugh at, those people whose life revolves around a particular game.

TEKKEN ZAIBATSU

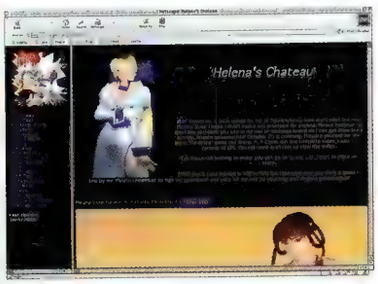
www.tekkenzaibatsu.com

You aren't very good at *Tekken*. Disagree? Fine. Spend an hour or so browsing the collective wisdom of tournament champions like Joey 'MrWizard' Cuellar and Vik 'Castel' Steyaert, and realise how hopelessly inadequate your current skills are. Despite being riddled with technical jargon, a FAQ section makes it readily accessible to rank amateurs, and it's comprehensive to an almost frightening degree. If you don't stay awake at night working out how you can exploit the frame-rate on Jun's Boomerang Sparrow to get an extra hit in, maybe it's time to start.

HELENA'S CHATEAU

www.geocities.com/kijime

After the cold-eyed professionalism of the *Tekken* Zaibatsu gang, it's nice to see someone who's just in it for the love of the game. *Dead or Alive 2* certainly attracts a lot of fan pages, but Kijime's is easily the best, simply because it's reasonably literate, extremely comprehensive and almost entirely free of sweaty ramblings about the game's scantily-clad ladies. The moves and secrets are exhaustively detailed, although some of the excitedly-scribbled 'fan art' is a bit worrying, and the photos of *DOA2* 'costume play' are downright disturbing. Just like a lot of our post this month.



METAL GEAR NET

www.metalgear.net

It's got a decent news archive on both games, and a huge gallery of fan art (crap) and Yoji Shinkawa art (brilliant, but probably illegal). There's also a fair amount of fan fiction, which tends to take the form of hairy-palmed wish fulfilment. For instance – 'Hawaiian music plays in the distance as Hal Emmerich lies on the white sands of a secluded beach. To his side is a curvaceous Kurdish female, wearing the smallest of swimwear.' No, we're not joking.

PRO TIPS

TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PLAYSTATION 2

CHALLENGES

Life's nothing without challenge. Wherever the PSM2 team roams, for instance, whether it's the heady glamour of ECTS or a dimly-lit rack of machines at the back of the Brixton academy, we're always on the lookout for someone to test our abilities. From next month onwards, we'll be daring you to better our *SSX* scores.

SILENT SCOPE

The 'Lights Are Out' Challenge

Night vision – handy if you're stalking someone, essential if you're Batman, and one of the perks of the job if you're a sniper. It isn't all good, though – try drawing a bead on an enemy while flares are going off, and you'll be blinded. Avoid lengthy job-related-injury courtroom battles, then, by simply not using the night-sight. In fact, complete the entire section – from the woods to Tom and Jerry – without zooming in. Just aim for the source of the torchlight...

SILENT NIGHT: Poor Tom's in very bad shape due to the undergrowth they'd probably survive.

SMUGGLER'S RUN

The 'Little and Large' Challenge

Swallowing cellophane-wrapped bundles of cocaine that could burst in your stomach and cause fatal intestinal haemorrhaging – where's the fun in that, eh? Smuggle the proper way – run the police barricades in a big van full of Ming vases. Alternatively, spice up the already tremendous Loot Grab two-player mode, by throwing all notions of a well-balanced team to the wind. Player One uses four massive trucks and Player Two uses four rally cars. Swap over for a second go, and the player with most loot after two runs wins.

A BRIDGE TOO FAR: The rally cars disturbingly fast – get ready to make several passes at the loot.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

The 'Big 5-0-0' Challenge

Dynasty Warriors is strange. Despite the fact that you're participating in battles from one of the most notoriously bloody periods of Chinese history, it insists that you're only knocking people unconscious – hence the big KO meter at the bottom of the screen. This is not only misleading, but dangerous – it's very important to remember that if you hit someone with a big spear, *you kill them*. So, for this challenge, simply get 500 *kills* in the first level. The key is to make sure you're just far enough ahead of your troops to do all the heavy spearing on your own, but not so far away that they can't back you up. Also, it's worth bearing in mind that running people over on a horse doesn't count towards your total – the kills go, quite rightly, to the horse.

GIVE US A TWIRL: This young lady's extremely good in the middle of a scrap, but useless on horseback.

›YOUR QUESTIONS... ANSWERED

Q&A Q&A

Finally, we're getting people riled up. While we don't entirely agree with David Fulstow (see his letter below), we can't help but salute him for his devotion to *Tekken*. Remember – if *you've* got a favourite character who you don't think we devote enough attention to, or if you happen to disagree with the assertion that Mokujin's a waste of space on the character roster, feel free to let us know at PSM2@futurenet.co.uk. In the meantime, David Fulstow – come on down...

Q: IT SEEMS THAT YOU ARE TRYING TO SUGGEST THAT THE ORDER OF CHARACTERS YOU PUT IN EACH ISSUE'S TEKKEN GUIDES ARE THE STRONGEST CHARACTERS. ARE YOU TRYING TO SUGGEST THAT CHARACTERS SUCH AS WANG AND JUN ARE BETTER THAN JULIA OR BRUCE? DID YOU KNOW JULIA IS ACTUALLY CONSIDERED OVERUSED AT HIGH-LEVEL PLAY?

FROM: David Fulstow, via e-mail

A: A couple of fair points, and well taken – but it's worth remembering that tournament-level play is a very different game from post-pub *Tekken*. Julia's diversity might serve you well against an expert, but in a typical scrap it's easiest to go for a hard-hitter like Paul. Besides which, we've been going through the characters in order of popularity and accessibility in the game – which is why Lei and the boys were in our first issue, while Julia's detailed in the magazine you're holding now.

Q: WILL ANY OF THE 2D FIGHTERS - LIKE STREET FIGHTER ALPHA: 3RD STRIKE OR MARVEL VS. CAPCOM 2 - BE COMING OUT ON THE PS2?

A: We had a word with Capcom and they wouldn't confirm or deny anything. However, we seem to remember there being a similar question mark hanging over the release of the original *Marvel vs Capcom* on the PSone, and Capcom don't seem overly keen on restricting themselves to a single platform, so we'd say the chances are good.

Q: WHAT GAMES SHOULD I BUY AT LAUNCH?

A: We get asked this a ridiculous amount, and the answer's very simple – buy the games we review that get high scores, unless you're afflicted with a rabid hatred of the genre in question. If you've got even a passing affection for beat-em-ups, for instance, get *Tekken Tag*. If you like having fun, get *SSX*. See?

›GAMING LINGO...

FIGHTING TALK

Every truly great game develops a language of its own – this month, we've mostly been murmuring about Fakies, Trick Boosts and 1080s, courtesy of *SSX*. To the layman, the terms used sound innocuous, but to the gaming community they're basic vocabulary – which is why we're explaining them here. This month: 'Chickening', courtesy of *Tekken Tag Tournament*.

Fighting with a character like Kuma, you're all too vulnerable to counters – he's got little choice but to flail away with his big furry arms, and standing attacks are easy to catch. So be sneaky – throw an obvious punch or kick, then immediately do the appropriate counter-*reversal*. For a right-handed move, simply hit forward, Rp and Rk together for a left-hander, use Lp and Lk. This way, if some cheeky scamp goes for a wristlock, you'll effortlessly clock them one – if they don't, nothing will happen.

Why 'Chickening'? Well, Namco realise it's not a very sporting way to behave, so when you do it a throaty voice goes "Chicken". Simple, no?

CHICKEN RUN: Also a fine move to use against counter-mad Nina players. Beat them senseless.

"And then I finally got my Super Licence in Gran Turismo. Yes, I did!"

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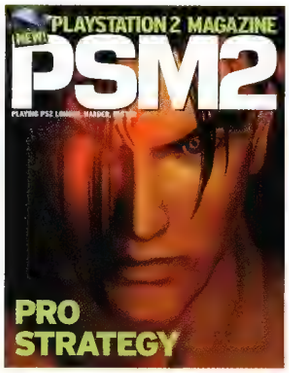


TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

OK, so you've played the main characters to death? Want something a bit special? How about every ultra-secret fighter then?

EXPERT: Joel Snape

- **DEVELOPER** Namco
- **PUBLISHER** Namco
- **GAME TYPE** Fighting

›EXPERT ADVICE

MASTER CLASS

Computers are tricky to beat because, like Robert Patrick in Terminator 2, they're implacable. With other people, it's simple: just piss them off.

1 INTERCEPTING FISTS

When you're fighting up close, getting the hits in is more important than making them hurt. Almost all of the flying kicks and roundhouses in the game take a painfully long time to connect, and it's easy to frustrate an opponent by slipping in the occasional jab or snap kick. In fact, flicking the occasional punch out can be more effective than trying to string together a combo – your opponent will stop blocking and attempt to retaliate as you pause, then take another smack in the mouth for their nerve.

2 MIX IT UP

Most two-hit combos have alternative endings, and you'll only have a split-second to decide what level to block at, and if you wait until the move's coming you're too late. So it's vital to watch for the tell-tale signs that let you know what's coming.

For instance, Jin can follow his rising uppercut with either a sweep or a mid-kick, but if it's the latter he'll start to move his leg while he's in the air. *Watch*. Then use them on player two.

3 PUNISH MISTAKES

Tekken experts are difficult to beat, rank beginners slightly less so. Aspiring scrappers are the easiest of all, as they abandon off-putting limb flailing in favour of a pathetic reliance on doing the single combo they've memorised over and over again.

Work out what their favourite move is (odds on it'll either be a ten-string or Paul's Phoenix Smasher), try to look contemptuous as you block it, then batter them senseless. Neutralise their favourite move with ease, and they'll be afraid to try it on you again.

4 STICK AND MOVE

Countering in *Tekken* is almost too difficult to be worth the time and effort it involves to master it, but dodging certainly isn't.

Close in, it's worth paying attention to moves like Lei's Drunken Headbutt or Paul's shimmy-away-then-punch, as they'll take you just out of harm's way, then leap back in with a vicious counter-hit.

Having your favourite moves blocked is one thing, but when they hit nothing but air, even the most hardened *Tekken* player begins to doubt themself.

5 TAG... A LOT

Not only is this important to preserve your energy and prevent an early end to the fight, but you can use it as an extension of the tip above.

As player two storms in with, say, a Thunder Godfist, simply tap tag to stroll off the screen and out of harm's way. Then, before your next character enters the screen, start the movement for a dash attack of your own (try Lei's rush or – yes – the Phoenix Smasher) to sprint in with an unstoppable combo.

Alternatively, if you're knocked to the ground, hit tag just as you land, and your fighter should roll straight away from more punishment Also, try experimenting with jabbing the tag button immediately after throws and special moves – some, such as Law's Poison Arrow, can be followed up with a flying kick when teamed with certain tag partners.

›FLIPPANT SHE-CREATURE

UNKNOWN

DOG MAN STAR: The wolf spirit restores Unknown's health if you meet her in single-player mode.

While most of *Tekken*'s characters have fascinating backgrounds and detailed relationships with the other participants, Unknown's creators seem to have gone for the style-over-content approach, with only a Jin tattoo as a clue to her history.

She's a perfect example of junkie-waif-chic, but she's also one of the best fighters in the game, since she can switch styles mid-scrap. Oh, and she's got a lycanthropic spectre constantly mimicking her every move and glaring at you with its scary yellow eyes. We can't work out whether this is another example of Grrrl Power or just vaguely disturbing.

She'll change move-sets when she tags, but you can also force it by pressing the R3 button in the middle of a bout. This isn't as useful as it sounds, as it's still a little too random for our tastes. At least she looks a little cooler than the dummies below, and comes packed with a great end movie.

›CURLY-HAIRED SLACKER

MOKUJIN/ TETSUJIN

HE-MANNEQUIN: Plenty of moves from every character, but who wants to play with a doll?

With Dr B and Gon absent from *Tag*, the only character left to lower the tone of *Tekken* from distractingly vicious fighting tournament to low-rent farce is, of course, Mokujin.

He's inexplicably popular with top players who want to prove their overall mastery and flexible fighting skills but, let's face it, looks stupid.

He's supposed to represent the expertise of 2000 years' worth of masters distilled into a wooden training dummy, which is a slightly tenuous explanation for why he's able to mimic any fighter. You'll be able to tell which character you are either by your taunt at the start of a bout, your stance (Kuma, for instance, tends to hunch over, while Eddy dances about), or of course, by executing some favourite combos from other characters. Try out Tetsujin if you're a fan of metal rather than wood...

MOVES KEY

f - tap → once
d/f - tap ↘ once
b - tap ← once
d/b - tap ↙ once
d - tap ↓ once
u/f - tap ↗ once
u - tap ↑ once
u/b - tap ↖ once
F - Hold stick forward
D/F - Hold stick down/forward
B - Hold stick back
D/B - Hold stick down/back
D - Hold stick down

PSM2 WATCH OUT! NEW CHARACTER MOVES EXCLUSIVE TO TEKKEN TAG ARE WRITTEN IN UPPER CASE

U/F - Hold stick up/forward
U - Hold stick up
U/B - Hold stick up/back
N - Neutral joystick position (Joystick is not touched)
SS - Sidestep (u,N or d,N)
QCF - Quarter circle forward (Circle stick from down to forward)
QCB - Quarter circle back (Circle stick from down to back)
HCF - Half circle forward (Circle stick from back to down to forward)
HCB - Half circle back (Circle stick from forward to down to back)

LINKING & SPECIAL CONVENTIONS

+ - Moves must be done together
, - Moves must be done right after the other
~ - Moves must be done IMMEDIATELY after the other
_ - Or (When used between two moves, they are interchangable)
> - Move following the > has the option of being slightly delayed
- Hold movement preceeding the '#' until end of string or until N (Neutral)
FC - Do move during full crouched position
WS - While standing up (Returning the stick to neutral from a crouch)
RN - While running
BK - Back facing the opponent
FD/FT - Lying on the ground Face Down / Feet Towards opponent
FD/FA - Lying on the ground Face Down / Feet Away from opponent
FU/FT - Lying on the ground Face Up / Feet Towards opponent
FU/FA - Lying on the ground Face Up / Feet Away from opponent
CH - Major Counterhit (Hitting your opponent during their move execution)
[] - Brackets surrounding an item indicate an optional output
() - Parenthesis indicates moves grouped together
{} - Curved brackets indicate buttons needed to break a throw
: - Pause 1/3 a second between button presses (Tenstring timings only)

EIGHT LEGGED DJ

GANRYU

He's a big man, but he's out of shape. Still, if *Tekken* was held in a pub car park, Ganryu would probably win.

As a sport, Sumo has everything – tradition, ceremony, and two big fat blokes laying into each other with surprising grace and poise. Ganryu's actually quite a faithful representation of a real Yokozuna – witness, for instance, his barrages of slaps that'll put even hardened scrappers on the defensive. If you want to get a bit cheeky, try hopping towards your opponent with the Kabuki Dance, or follow up a Mega Upper with the eye-watering Sumo Stomp, which should connect just as they land.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! SALT SHAKER ←+▲

GRAPPLING

UPPER STREAM [TAG] (FROM LEFT) ..... (□+✕)_▲+○)_▲+Tag)
CROTCH SLAM [TAG] (FROM RIGHT) ..... (□+✕)_▲+○)_▲+Tag)
PEDAL PRESS (FROM BACK) ..... ↓+□+▲
REVERSE CHOKE SLAM (FROM BACK) ..... (□+✕)_▲+○)_▲+Tag)
Body Drop (from front) ..... □+✕
Hip Toss (from front) ..... ▲+○
Jizo Hug (from front) ..... →,→+▲+✕
Lifting Toss (from front) ..... →+▲+○

SHARE WEAR: Their moves aren't similar but they're both big boys who dig flares.

MOVES

SUMO MEGA UPPER ..... ←,↙,↓,↘+□ [~Tag]
Falling Hammer ..... SS+□
Sumo Hammer ..... □,□,□
Left Nodowa Rush ..... ↘,□,▲,□
Right Nodowa Rush ..... ↘,▲,□,▲
Windmill Rush ..... FC,↘+□,▲,□
Windmill Backhand ..... □
Hammer Rush ..... FC+□,□,□,▲
High Punch ..... →+□
Mid Punch ..... ↘+□
Low Punch ..... ↓+□
Devil Palm Thrusts →+□,▲,□,▲,□,▲,□,▲
Hammer Chop - Hammer Upper ..... □+▲<□+▲
Palm Lift ..... FC+□+▲

NEW COMBO!

While Ganryu has some decent punches, this combo massively relies on his strength, throwing in some huge punches before leading into his infinite smacks.

F+○,□,□,□,□,↓+▲,▲,▲,▲,▲

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

Hammer Upper - Hammer Chop ..... WS+□+▲<□+▲
Pedal Press ..... (SS_↓)+□+▲
Sumo Charge ..... →+□+▲
Sumo Scissors ..... →,→_F)+□+▲
Palm Upper ..... ↘+▲
Devil Palm Thrusts ..... □,▲,□,▲,□,▲,□,▲
Jab - Elbow ..... (→,→_F)+▲+□
Megaton Palm ..... ←,↙,↓,↘+▲
Kabuki Dance (infinate) ..... ↓+▲,▲,▲,▲,▲
Thunder Slap ..... ↘+▲+✕
Devil Palm Thrusts ..... ▲,□,▲,□,▲,□,▲,□
Sand Sweeper ..... ↘+✕
Thigh Quake ..... ↓+○
Sumo Slide ..... WR →,F+✕+○
Sumo Sit ..... ↓+✕+○
Sit Thrust ..... □
Sit Sweep ..... ▲
Sumo Squash - Sumo Sit ..... ↗+✕+○
Spring Hammer - Sumo Sit ..... KND ↓+□+▲
Sit Thrust ..... □
Sit Sweep ..... ▲
Roll Forward ..... F
Roll Back ..... B
Splits ..... ~D
Splits Side Step ..... (↑_↓)
High & Mid Punch Parry ..... ←+(□+✕ _▲+○)
Pedal Press ..... ~□+▲

COMBO

↘+□,WS+○,○,↘+□▲,↓+○,○

MONOLITHIC FISHMONGER X

BRUCE IRWIN

If you're the sort of person who was rooting for Jean-Claude to get his head kicked in during the final reel of Kickboxer – good for you.

In real life, Bruce would probably win the *Tekken* tournament – Thai boxers tend to be fearsomely hard, shunning elaborate kata and philosophical musings in favour of harsh conditioning and headbutting trees. In the game he's a brutal fighter – his elbows and knees are damn-near uncounterable, while his spinning back elbow and back flip thrust kick are deceptively nasty. Still, he's fairly short on decent combos and none of them are particularly difficult to block, so keep your guard up and be ready to counter.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! FAST BUSTER ↘+▲

GRAPPLING

KNEE FACE BASH (FROM FRONT) ..... □+✕ [~Tag]
RIB CRUSHER (FROM FRONT) ..... ▲+○
HEAD BREAKER (FROM LEFT) ..... (□+✕)_▲+○)_▲+Tag)
FACE BREAKER (FROM RIGHT) ..... (□+✕)_▲+○)_▲+Tag)
REVERSE NECK TOSS (FROM BACK) ..... (□+✕)_▲+○)_▲+Tag)

MULTIPART THROWS

Embracing Knee Strike (from front) ..... →,N,↓,↘+□+▲+○
Tumble Weed ..... □+▲,□+▲,□+▲
Left Knee Strike ..... (✕_○),□+▲+✕
Turning Right Knee ..... □,✕,□+▲+○
Rising Knee ..... ▲,○,□,□+▲+✕

NEW COMBO!

A lot of combos rely on very fancy finishing moves to complete the task. This one simply concentrates on getting the job done with the utmost simplicity.

○,□,○,□,↘,→F▲,✕,✕

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

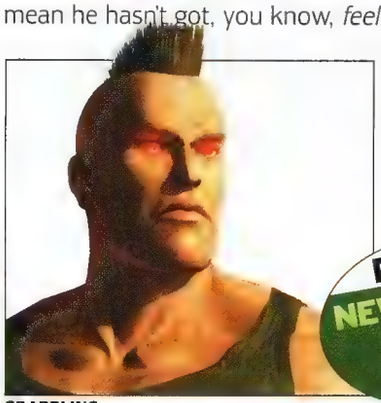
MOVES

DOUBLE FACE BUSTER ..... ↘+□,▲ [~Tag]
FACE BUSTER ..... ↘+▲ [~Tag]
BRUCE GATLING SPECIAL ..... ✕,▲,□,○ [~Tag]
Bruce Rush ..... □,▲,□,▲
Triple Elbow Rush ..... →+□,▲,□
Nightmare Elbow ..... SS+□
Nightmare Back Knuckle ..... ←+□
Tornado Upper ..... FC,↘,↓,↘+□
Thai High Kick ..... ✕
Southern Cross ..... □,○,✕
Sledge Hammer ..... □+▲
Short Step In Upper ..... ↘+□+▲
Slice Elbow ..... →+□+▲
Upper ..... WS+▲
Thai Face Kick ..... →+○
Shin Kick ..... ↓+○
Nightmare Mach Punch ..... →,→+▲
Handspring Backflip ..... ←,←,N+✕+○
Step In Mid Kick ..... ↘+✕+○
Rave Kick ..... ↓+✕+○

BUDGET NUDIST

JACK 2/P-JACK

He may be a living weapon with disturbingly red eyes, but that doesn't mean he hasn't got, you know, *feelings*.



Even the most battle-scarred *Tekken* veterans wiped away a tear at Jack's ending last time round – "I know now vy you cry – but it is something I can nevah doo." Fortunately, he's back to being a remorseless, government-sanctioned killing machine, and while he's a bit short on new moves, his kneecap-shattering low punches are as effective as ever. Also, try to vary whether you follow up the Tornado Cutter with a heavy punch or double-handed blow, as they hit at different heights.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! DRILL UPPER

GRAPPLING

TORNADO (FROM LEFT) . . . . . (△+○_△+Tag)
FATHER'S LOVE (FROM RIGHT) . . . . . (△+○ △+Tag)
REVERSE LIFT SLAM (FROM BACK) . . . . . (△+○_△+Tag)
Hell Press (from front) . . . . . □+✕
Ground Zero (from front) . . . . . △+○
Gigaton Punishment . . . . . ↙,↓,↘+△
Body Smash (from front) . . . . . ↙+△+✕

MOVES

MEGATON UPPER . . . . . ←,↙,↓,↘+□ [~Tag]
PUNCH - ELBOW - UPPERCUT . . . . . △,□,△ [~Tag]
PJack Hammer . . . . . □,□,□
Machine Gun - Megaton Punch . . . . . ↙+□,□,□,△
Gigaton Punch . . . . . hcf+□
Uppercut Rush . . . . . ↘+□,△,□,△
Quick Upper Rush . . . . . (↘,□,△,□_FC,↘+□,△,□)
Windmill . . . . . FC,↘+□,△,□
Windmill Backhand . . . . . □
Machine Elbow . . . . . →+□
Tornado Cutter . . . . . SS+□+△
Hammer Knuckle - Double Uppercut . . . . . □+△<□+△
Double Uppercut - Hammer Knuckle . . . . . WS+□+△<□+△
Arm Scissors . . . . . →+□+△
Ground Drill . . . . . ↘+□+△
Tile Splitter - Deathfist . . . . . ↓+□,△
Cemaho Chop . . . . . →,→+△
Quick Upper Rush . . . . . (↘,△,□,△_FC)
Short Hammer Rush . . . . . (↘,△_FC,↘+△)
Low Punch . . . . . ↓+□
Mid Punch . . . . . ↘+□
High Punch . . . . . →+□
Hammer Upper Rush . . . . . ↘+△,□,△,□
Megaton Punch . . . . . ←,↙,↓,↘+△
Drill Punch . . . . . SS+△
Hip Press . . . . . ↗+✕+○
Sit Down . . . . . ↓+✕+○
Sitting Punches . . . . . (□,△,□,△_△,□,△,□)
Spring Hammer - Sit Down . . . . KND ↓+□+△
Sitting Punches . . . . . □,△,□,△_△,□,△,□
Digital Hans Headslide . . . . . →+✕+○
Clock Up . . . . . ←+□+△
Dark Greeting . . . . . →+○~□
Gigaton Stomp . . . . . ✕+○
Double Thrust Gigaton Stomp . . . ✕+○,✕+○
Triple Thrust Gigaton Stomp ✕+○,✕+○,✕+○
Gigaton Start Up . . . . . hcf
Wind Up . . . . . ←,↙,↓,↘,→,↗,↑,↖

THE VEST OF FRIENDS: Jack celebrates yet another "Lift the 16-year-old' award in style.

NEW COMBO!

Throw in a few punches to soften up the opponent, a couple of kicks before finishing off with one of the most gruesome moves in the entire game. Nice!

△,□,✕,□,✕□,□+△,↙+△+✕

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 2

BELLOWING RAP MACHINE

KUNIMITSU

She's from the same clan as Yoshimitsu, and – hang on, aren't they space ninjas, or something? We don't understand.

She's a ninja trained by the Manji Clan, except she's been banished – a problem she intends to solve in the time-honoured *Tekken* manner of beating up anyone she comes across. She's much more than just a Yoshi clone with a shorter sword – she's quicker, which helps those unblockable dagger attacks connect, and she's got some nifty teleport evasion moves.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! JUNKYARD COMBO ←+△,✕,○ [~Tag]

GRAPPLING

AVALANCHE (FROM LEFT) . . . . . (□+✕ △+○_△+Tag)
TORNADO (FROM RIGHT) . . . . . (□+✕,△+○_△+Tag)
REVERSE NECK TOSS (FROM BACK) . . . . . (□+✕_△+○ △Tag)
Leaping Body Slam (from front) . . . . . □+✕
Tickle Bash (from front) . . . . . △+○
Judo Hip Toss . . . . . ↙+□+✕
Manji Rana . . . . . (from front) →+□+○

MOVES

STEP IN UPPER . . . . . ↘+△ [~Tag]
RISING KUZURA . . . . . →,→+△ [~Tag]
Jab – Uppercut . . . . . □,△
Jab - Double Uppercut . . . . . □,△,□
Stone Fists . . . . . ←+□,□,□,□,□,□
Kunai Thrust . . . . . □+△
Dive Bomb . . . . . →,→+□+△
Winter Wind . . . . . SS+□+△
Cycle of Rebirth . . . . . ←+□+△
Flash Attack . . . . . △,✕
Low Flash Attack . . . . . △,↓+✕
Inverted Stalker . . . . . →,→+✕
Thrust Stalker . . . . . ○
Zig Zag . . . . . ✕,○
Ninja Jewel . . . . . ✕
Lunging Sweep . . . . . FC,↘+✕
Rising Kick . . . . . →+○
Poison Wind . . . . . ↗+✕+○
Shark Attack . . . . . →,→+✕+○
Dive Bomb . . . . . □+△
Ninja Jewel . . . . . ~✕
Ninja Flying Shadow . . . . . ✕+○
Fairy Wax . . . . . (FC_↓)+✕+○
Kunai Dragon Tail . . . . . SS+✕+○
Growling Jewel . . . . . →+✕+○
Fubuki . . . . . →,→+○
Triple Roundhouse . . . . . ○,○,○
Avoiding the Puddle . . . . . (↖_↑_↗)+○
Earth Divide . . . . . ↓+□+△
Evasive Backflip . . . . . ↑,↖
Kunai Stab . . . . . ↙+△
Kunai Murder . . . . . ←+△
Kunai Advance . . . . . →,→,N+△
Kunai Sky Drop . . . . . ↑+□+△

ICE WITH A SLICE: That's the last time Wang'll get Kunimistu confused with the uglier Yoshimitsu.

COMBO

Ten hit . . . □,△,□,○,○,○,□,△,✕,△

NEW COMBO!

Kunimitsu's finest elements (her six or seven decent kicks) are all worth trying when it comes to creating a combo. Here's one of the best.

↗+✕,✕~→,F+✕+○,↓+✕

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

WINGED MASTA COW

TRUE OGRE

"You, sir, are an imposter!" intoned True Ogre at the end of *Tekken 3*, confronting 'fake' (presumably) Ogre. Christ, loosen up, man!

Ogre has very long arms. On the negative side, though, he's armed with a bewildering number of moves, most of which seem at odds with his lumbering stature (the Hunting Hawk? What?), and his fiery-breath move leaves him horribly vulnerable against anyone but random button-slappers. His special 'chewing' move, though, is a treat to see, if not experience. Odd, you might think, that the God of Fighting is actually the worst character in the entire game.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! DEMON GUTPUNCH tap ↘+Ⓐ

GRAPPLING

CHOKE SLAM (FROM LEFT)	(□+⊗_Ⓐ+◎_Ⓐ+Tag)
RAG DOLL (FROM RIGHT)	(□+⊗_Ⓐ+◎_Ⓐ+Tag)
BEAR SWING (FROM RIGHT)	(□+⊗ Ⓐ+◎_Ⓐ+Tag)
Body Slam (from front)	□+⊗
Bear Hug (from front)	Ⓐ+◎
Waning Moon (from front)	↘,↘+Ⓐ+◎

MOVES

TOOTH FAIRY	Ⓐ [~Tag]
Double Punch	□,Ⓐ
Demon Slayer	□,Ⓐ,Ⓐ
Double Face Buster	↘+□,Ⓐ
Shining Fists	□,□,Ⓐ
Cat Thrust	D,→+□
Lunging Double Fist	→,→+□+Ⓐ
Buffalo Horn	↘+□+Ⓐ
Black Shoulder	→+□+◎
Knuckle Bomb	(↑_↗)+□+Ⓐ
Jumping Knuckle Bomb	(↑_↗),N+□+Ⓐ
Demon Backhand Spin	Ⓐ,Ⓐ
Demon Gut Punch	WS+Ⓐ
Front Strike	→+Ⓐ
Upper	↘+Ⓐ

NEW COMBO!

Surely any combo from this guy has to end in flames. It's one of the great moves in the game so don't be afraid to use it. Just not too often – it'll become easier to block...

□,□,Ⓐ,WS+Ⓐ,□+Ⓐ

Scarlett Windmill	D,→+Ⓐ
Scarlet Sweep	D,↘+Ⓐ
Split Axe Kick	→,→+⊗
Back Flip Kick	↖+⊗
Hunting Hawk	↗+⊗,◎,⊗
Snake Creep	FC+⊗,⊗,↓+⊗
Snake Blade	FC+⊗,⊗,N+⊗
Tsunami Kick	WS+⊗,⊗
Step In Kick Infinite Starter	↘+⊗
Silver Low Infinite Starter	D+⊗
Rave Kicks	⊗,⊗,⊗,⊗
Feint Hammer - Rave Kicks	↑+⊗,⊗,⊗
Silver Low - Rave Kicks	↓+⊗,⊗,⊗
Exploder	
f,f+⊗+◎	
Delayed Dragon Slide	→,→,N+⊗+◎
Spin Kick	WS+⊗+◎
Evil Wheel	↑+⊗+◎
Demon Tail	↓+⊗+◎
Tail Spin	↘+⊗+◎
Back Turned Position	~↘
Double Spin	⊗+◎
Axe Kick	→+◎
Azteca Shoot	SS+◎
BLAZING KICK	↓,↙+◎ [~Tag]
Laser Edge - Machine Gun Kick	↓+◎,N+◎
Bazooka Kick	→,→+◎
Hammer Heel	→,→,N+◎
Tsunami Kick	WS+◎,◎
Scissors Kick	◎~⊗
Hell Flame	□+Ⓐ
Hell Inferno	↓+□+Ⓐ

FLAMIN' HELL: Now if only True Ogre had obeyed the Fireworks Code he could have been a bit of a looker.

DETECTIVE VENTRILOQUIST

DEVIL/ANGEL

Next year, Namco will be releasing a sitcom based around this wacky twosome's hilarious co-habiting antics. Honestly.

Here's a strange one. In a condensed version of the Sunset-Beach-level *Tekken* plot – Kazuya allows demon to possess him, tries to kill his dad, gets killed by his dad, resurfaces as purple devil-bloke. Angel, we can only assume, is the good part of Kazuya's conscience fighting for mastery of his soul, like in the Droopy cartoons. Anyway, they're both exactly the same as Kazuya, but don't bother using the eye-beam moves, as any self-respecting player'll batter you senseless as soon as you've finished.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! WIND GODFIST →,N,↓,↘+Ⓐ [~Tag]

GRAPPLING

STEEL PEDAL DROP (FROM LEFT)	(□+⊗_Ⓐ+◎_Ⓐ+Tag)
SKULL SMASH (FROM RIGHT)	(□+⊗_Ⓐ+◎_Ⓐ+Tag)
ATOMIC DROP (FROM BACK)	(□+⊗_Ⓐ+◎_Ⓐ+Tag)
Bitch Kicks (from front)	□+⊗
Hip Toss (from front)	Ⓐ+◎
Stone Head (from front)	→,→+□+Ⓐ

MOVES

TWIN PISTONS	↘+□,Ⓐ [~Tag]
DEVIL TWISTER	SS+Ⓐ [~Tag]
WIND GODFIST	→,N,↓,↘+Ⓐ [~Tag]
Double Punch	□,Ⓐ

HAND OF GOD: Heaven was the last thing on his mind when Angel got the point... that was her fist.

Shining Fists	□,□<Ⓐ
Demon Slayer	□,Ⓐ<Ⓐ
Devil Fist	→,→+Ⓐ
Demon Backhand Spin	Ⓐ,Ⓐ
Split Axe Kick	→,→+⊗
Leaping Slash Kick	(WR_→,→,→)+⊗
Axe Kick	→+◎
Tsunami Kick	(WS_↘_→,N,↓,↘,→)+◎,◎
Hell Sweeps	→,N,↓,↘+◎,◎
Spinning Demon	↗+◎,◎
Demon Scissors	◎~⊗
Laser Beam	□+Ⓐ
Laser Blast	↑+□+Ⓐ
Devil Blaster	r⊗+◎
Reverse Devil Blaster	⊗+◎,⊗+◎

COMBO

Ten hit	→,F,Ⓐ,□,Ⓐ,Ⓐ,⊗,◎,◎,□,Ⓐ,□

NEW COMBO!

Remember, when it comes to designing new combos that these two rely heavily on Kazuya for the majority of their moves list.

→,F+⊗+Ⓐ,⊗,◎,⊗,Ⓐ+□

GREASY CHOIRBOY

ALEX/ROGER

They fight, and bite, and fight and bite and fight ...it's *Tekken's* marsupial/paleolithic era answer to Itchy and Scratchy.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! RUNNING BULLDOG (□+⊗+△+○ △Tag) (from right)

Watch Jurassic Park. Then watch an episode of Skippy, and try to decide who'd win in a fight between a Velociraptor and a child-friendly kangaroo in oversized boxing gloves. Anyway, Roger and Alex are basically the same character, and while neither's particularly good with juggling or combos, they're armed with a nice combination of moves nicked off Kazuya, King and Jack. Try getting your opponent on the defensive, then laying into them with the Gigaton punch as they try to block.

GRAPPLING

FRANKENSTEINER (FROM FRONT) ..... ↘+⊗+○ [~Tag]
SWINGING DDT (FROM LEFT) ..... (□+⊗ △+○ △Tag)
RUNNING BULLDOG (FROM RIGHT) ..... (□+⊗ △+○ △Tag)
REVERSE NECK TOSS (FROM BACK) ..... (□+⊗_△+○ △Tag)
Animal Stone Head (from front) ..... □+⊗
Power Bomb (from front) ..... △+○
DDT (from front) ..... ↙,↙+□+△
Tombstone Piledriver (from front) ..... ↙,→+△
Animal Swing (from front) ..... →,hcf+□
Animal Driver (from front) ..... qcf+□

MOVES

ANIMAL UPPER ..... FC, ↘+△ [~Tag]
SMASH UPPER ..... →,→+△ [~Tag]
GROUND SMASH ..... →,→,N+△
Double Punch – Upper ..... □,△,□
Elbow Sting ..... ↘+□
Animal Gigaton Punch ..... →,→,N+□
Animal Godfist ..... →,N,↓,↘+□
Low Jab – Upper ..... ↓+□,N+△
Rolling Animal Punch ..... →,N+□
Animal Rush - Windmill Punch ..... →,→+□,△,□,△,□
Flying Cross Chop ..... →,→+□+△
Animal Headbutt ..... ↘+□+△
Knuckle Bomb ..... (F →↗)+□+△
Animal Smash ..... FC+□+△
Delayed Animal Smash ..... →,N,↓,↘+□+△
Straight Right – Elbow ..... △,□
Elbow Drop ..... (↖_↑_↗)+△+○
Tail Cutter ..... ↙+⊗
Double Knee Drop ..... ↗+⊗+○
Delayed Drop Kick ..... ⊗+○
Animal Drop Kick ..... →,→+⊗+○
Satellite Drop Kick ..... (WR→,→,→)+⊗+○
Ali Kicks ..... (↓+⊗+○_D, ↘+○),○,○
Extended Ali Kicks ..... ○,○
Lunge Animal Kick ..... ←+⊗+○
Animal Kick Rush ..... ⊗,○
Frankensteiner ..... ↘+⊗+○
Konvict Kick ..... →,→,○
Animal Sweep ..... SS+○
Animal Kick ..... #△↙+○
Animal Gigaton Punch ..... B+□

NEW COMBO!

With only a fairly small range of moves you're never going to have a huge list of combos at your disposal. Here is one of our favourites.

○,△,○,△↗,+⊗,→,F+⊗+△

STEP 1

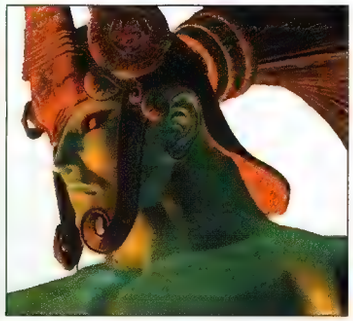
STEP 2

STEP 3

MASTA COW

OGRE

We always thought Ogres lurked under bridges eating goats, rather than floating about looking semi-mythical.



PSM2 NEW MOVE! BLAZING KICKS ↓↙+○ [~Tag]

Ogre roams the Earth looking for good fighters, and then eating their brains, sort of like an evil version of Cain from Kung Fu. Despite possessing a range of moves based on the other characters' unblockable attacks, he was a terrible character in the first *Tekken* and Namco have actually made him *worse* for this instalment. That makes sense then.

GRAPPLING

CHOKE SLAM (FROM LEFT) ..... (□+⊗_△+○_△+Tag)
RAG DOLL (FROM RIGHT) ..... (□+⊗_△+○_△+Tag)
BEAR SWING (FROM BACK) ..... (□+⊗_△+○_△Tag)
Bear Hug (from front) ..... △+○
Waning Moon (from front) ..... ↘,↘+△+○

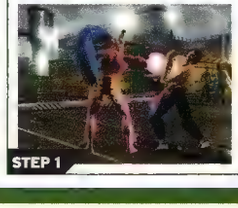
MOVES

BLAZING KICK ..... ↓,↙+○ [~Tag]
TOOTH FAIRY ..... △ [~Tag]
Double Punch ..... □,△
Demon Slayer ..... □,△,△
Double Face Buster ..... ↘+□,△
Shining Fists ..... □,□,△
Cat Thrust ..... D,→+□
Lunging Double Fist ..... →,→+□+△
Black Shoulder ..... →+□+○
Knuckle Bomb ..... (↑_↗)+□+△
Demon Backhand Spin ..... △,△
Demon Gut Punch ..... WS+△
Front Strike ..... →+△
Upper ..... ↘+△
Scarlett Windmill ..... D,→+△
Scarlet Sweep ..... D, ↘+△
Split Axe Kick ..... →,→+⊗
Back Flip Kick ..... ↖+⊗
Tooth Fairy ..... △ [~Tag]
Hunting Hawk ..... ↗+⊗,○,⊗
Snake Creep ..... FC+⊗,⊗,↓+⊗
Snake Blade ..... FC+⊗,⊗,N+⊗
Tsunami Kick ..... WS+⊗,⊗
Step In Kick Infinite Starter ..... ↘+⊗
Silver Low Infinite Starter ..... D+⊗
Rave Kicks ..... ⊗,⊗,⊗,⊗
Feint Hammer - Rave Kicks ..... ↑+⊗,⊗,⊗
Silver Low - Rave Kicks ..... ↓+⊗,⊗,⊗
Exploder ..... →,→+⊗+○
Delayed Dragon Slide ..... →,→,N+⊗+○
Spin Kick ..... WS+⊗+○
Axe Kick ..... →+○
Azteca Shoot ..... SS+○
Laser Edge - Machine Gun Kick ..... ↓+○,N+○
Bazooka Kick ..... →,→+○
Hammer Heel ..... →,→,N+○
Tsunami Kick ..... WS+○,○
Scissors Kick ..... ○~⊗
Ancient Power ..... ←+□+△

NEW COMBO!

OK, so this guy isn't as strong as True Ogre, but give this combo and try and you'll soon be reducing the power bar of any enemy who gets in the way.

↘+□,△,△,□,→,→+□+△,□+△


STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

OFFICER STINKAH

KUMA/PANDA

We can't help thinking it's a bit cruel to force animals to compete in no-holds combat. They love it, mind.

One is Ling's school chum, the other's the furry nemesis of Paul Phoenix, but they're both fundamentally the same character. Surprisingly, their most vicious moves aren't big hitters, but juggle moves. Keep low and paw away at your opponent's ankles with moves like the Salmon Hunter, and watch them grimace as their health slowly drains. Alternatively, advance on them at your full height, making growling noises or pointing out that pandas *have* been known to attack humans, actually.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! BEAR HEAVEN CANNON →,⊡,⊡,⊡

GRAPPLING

CHOKE SLAM (FROM LEFT) ..... (⊡+⊗_△+○_△+Tag)
RAG DOLL (FROM RIGHT) ..... (⊡+⊗_△+○_△+Tag)
BEAR SWING (FROM BACK) ..... (⊡+⊗_△+○_△+Tag)
CIRCUS ROLL (FROM FRONT) ..... hcb,→+⊡+△ [~Tag]
GRIZZLY FLING ..... ⊡+△[~Tag]
Bear Bite (from front) ..... ⊡+⊗
Bear Hug (from front) ..... △+○
Stone Head (from front) ..... →,→+⊡+○
Mauling Bear (from front) ..... ⊗+○,→+⊡+△

MOVES

BEAR HEAVEN CANNON ..... →+⊡,⊡,⊡ [~Tag]
DEMON BEAR FIST ..... →,→+△ [~Tag]
PUNCH-UPPER ..... △,⊡,△ [~Tag]
Hunting Claw - Bear Scratch ..... ⊡,△
Mauling Bear ..... →+⊡+△
Bear Tackle ..... ⊗+○
Deadly Claw ..... ←+⊡+△
Rolling Bear ..... →,↘,↓,↙,←,↖,↑,↗
Hunting Bear Stance ..... ⊗+○
Bear Hammer ..... ⊡,⊡,⊡
Bear Upper Rush ..... ↘+⊡,△,⊡,△
Quick Upper Rush ..... (↘,⊡,△,⊡_FC,↘+⊡,△,⊡)
Grizzly Upper - Grizzly Claw ..... WS+⊡,△

NEW COMBO!

This isn't a particularly tough one to perform so even the inexperienced gamer (ie. your girlfriend) should be able to bash through this after a couple of tries.

○,△,○,△,○+△,⊗+⊡

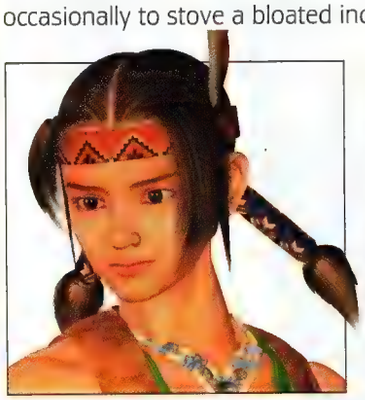
Grizzly Windmill ..... FC,↘+⊡,△,⊡
Bear Rush ..... FC+⊡,⊡,⊡,△
Low Punch ..... ↓+⊡
Mid Punch ..... ↘+⊡
High Punch ..... →+⊡
Hammer Rush ..... (↘,⊡,△_FC,↘+⊡,△)
Low Punch ..... ↓+⊡
Mid Punch ..... ↘+⊡
High Punch ..... →+⊡
Bear Knuckle ..... ⊡+△
Hunting Bear Stance ..... ~→
Claw Uppercut ..... <⊡+△
Claw Upper - Bear Knuckle ..... WS+⊡+△,⊡+
Hunting Bear Stance ..... ~→
Grizzly Scissors ..... →+⊡+△
Big Bear Belly Flop ..... ↗+⊡+△
Demon Bear ..... ←+△
Grizzly Head Butt ..... ↘+⊡+△
Bear Upper Rush ..... ↘+△,⊡,△,⊡
Short Hammer Rush ..... (↘,△_FC,↘+△)
Low Punch ..... ↓+⊡
Mid Punch ..... ↘+⊡
High Punch ..... →+⊡
Quick Uppercut Rush ..... (↘,△,⊡,△_FC,↘+△,⊡,△)
Grizzly Claw ..... ←,↙,↓,↘+△
Salmon Hunter ..... ←,→+△+⊗
Pancake Press ..... ↗+⊗+○
Sit Down ..... ↓+⊗+○
Spring Claw - Sit Down ..... KND ↓+⊡+△
Sitting Claws ..... (⊡,△,⊡,△_△,⊡,△,⊡)
Hunting Bear Stance ..... ⊗+○

KUMA CHAMELEON: The grizzly fella has a plush polar bear costume as well as the panda alternative.

100 WATT WARLOCK

JULIA CHANG

She walks and talks and squawks with the animals, pausing occasionally to stove a bloated industrialist's head in.



Beginners will whine 'But she's just the same as Michelle'. Allow yourself a wry smile, then batter them senseless. Michelle's a dancer – with her flips and spins she can run rings round opponents, but she's not too hard. Julia, on the other hand, is a brawler – her punishing Mad Axe throw's got excellent range, she's got some nifty juggles and her sweep-dropkick combo's horribly damaging and extremely difficult to block. As a bare-knuckle-fighting Native American, she's also pretty handy with her fists.

PSM2 NEW MOVE! GERMAN SUPLEX ⊡,⊗,△,○,△(Tag) (FROM BACK)

GRAPPLING

ARM WHIP (FROM FRONT) ..... ←+△ [~Tag]
RUNNING BULLDOG (FROM LEFT) ..... (⊡+⊗ △+○ △Tag)
TWISTED SISTER (FROM RIGHT) ..... (⊡+⊗ △+○ △Tag)
GERMAN SUPLEX (FROM BACK) ..... (⊡+⊗ △+○ △Tag)
Death Valley Bomb (from front) ..... ⊡+⊗
Fisherman Suplex (from front) ..... △+○
Rear Suplex ..... ↓+⊡+△
Arm Lock Suplex (from front) ..... ↘+⊡+△
Waist Suplex (from front) ..... ↓,↙+⊡+⊗
Cross Arm Lock (from front) ..... FC,↙,↓,↙+⊡+△
Mad Axes (from front) ..... qcb,→+△

MOVES

ULTIMATE CANNON ..... (↓+△~N+⊗_△+⊗),⊡ [~Tag]
FLASH UPPERCUT ..... →+⊡ [~Tag]
SKYSCRAPER CANNON ..... ~⊡ [~Tag]
SHOVE IT UP ..... ⊡+△ [~Tag]
CLUB FIST - FLASH UPPERCUT ..... ⊡,⊡ [~Tag]
Bow & Arrow ..... ○,⊗
G-Clef - Gut Punch ..... ⊡~△
Palm Explosion ..... ↓+⊡~△
Club Fist - Bow & Arrow ..... ⊡+○,⊗
Gut Punch ..... ↘+△
Finish Elbow ..... (WR_FC,↘)+△
Parting Fist ..... SS+△
Arm Whip ..... (←+△ △~←)
Back Push ..... (⊡+△_5)
Tequila Sunrise ..... (WS+△_⊗~△)
Club Fist - Bow & Arrow ..... ⊡,○,⊗ FC,↘+○,⊗
Low Parry ..... (FC_↓)+(⊡+⊗_△+○)

COMBOS

Heaven Cannon ..... →+⊡+○

NEW COMBO!

Like her mother from last issue, Julia's strength is her speed. By the time you've flung a few punches then a couple of kicks in, the grapple is pretty much natural.

△,⊡,⊡,△,⊗,⊗,△,⊡,→+○+⊗

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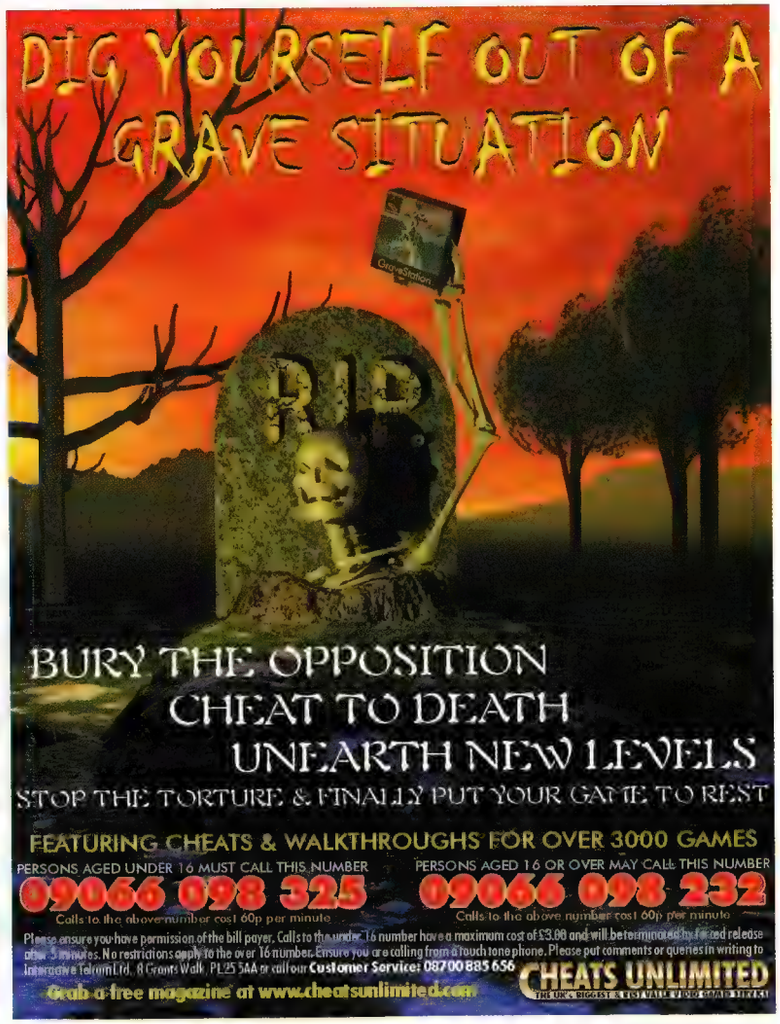
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DR ZEUSS AND CORNETTO'S TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY

PSM2 PAYS PEANUTS FOR SOME BRAIN-POPPING JIGGERY-POKERY

TEXTURE MAPPING? ¿QUE, QUE, QUE?

Our sentient simians dish out the knowledge, and insults, that help you understand the finer points of PS2. LABORATORY ASSISTANT: Robin Alway

And you call us monkeys cheeky. The Technology Laboratory has been inundated with e-mails from confused humans, complaining that they are mystified by my brainy orang-utan mentor Dr Zeuss' explanation of PS2 technical stuff. Some of you were actually quite insulting, drawing attention to the good doctor's gingerness. So this month, things will get even simpler as we tackle Texture Mapping. Please try to keep up, for Clyde's sake. Dr Zeuss?

Ah, thank you Cornetto. So it's you lot again with your bald faces. Your race might have invented Banana Nesquik (cheers for that), but you have much to learn when it comes to PS2. This month, I shall try to poke the concept of Texture Mapping through the bars of your bare cell of a human brain. Now the best way to understand this is to simply look around you at your soon-to-be destroyed world. There are textures everywhere. Take these wooden clubs we use when hunting humans, for example. Look closely and you can see the grain of the wood. Or observe the brick walls of your depressingly untree-like dwellings. The bricks have a rough surface. Both are textures.

So how does this relate to games, o' wise one? What is Texture Mapping?

Texture Mapping in its most basic form involves a texture placed onto the flat surface of an in-game polygon. So when you see a crate in a game it's actually a cube with a photograph of a wooden crate mapped onto the sides. Adding textures makes things look more realistic. Imagine a 3D room in *Metal Gear Solid*. If flat colours were used instead of textures on the furniture, it'd look like a cartoon.

"THERE ARE TEXTURES EVERYWHERE. TAKE THIS WOODEN CLUB WE USE WHEN HUNTING HUMANS. LOOK CLOSELY AND YOU CAN SEE THE GRAIN IN THE WOOD"

So this Texture Mapping makes objects appear much more realistic, Dr Zeuss?

Exactly, Cornetto. Once a game developer has a texture – and increasingly they're capturing them from the real world using digital cameras – they can wrap it around any 3D object. In fact, the textures themselves have three dimensional properties. A shiny texture on a car can reflect light for example, whereas you can see through a glass texture. Any decent first-person shooter will show your bullet holes appear on the wall textures. Or blacken objects and environments after an explosion.

The humans are scratching their heads. What does all this mean for PS2 games?

It means they look great. PS2's unparalleled power means that, more than on any other previous console, once a texture has been used a whole host of effects can be added. Maybe a nice bit of Gouraud shading to create a lighting effect for example. And because of its super-quick DVD drive, there's no reason why textures can't be streamed straight off the game disc. As programmers gradually learn how to get to grips with the PS2's technical set-up expect to see some amazing use of textures to make the most realistic looking games yet seen!

Thank you once again Dr Zeuss. I think they are beginning to get it.

Good, good. Maybe next month they will be lucky enough to witness my famed Tri-linear Mip Mapping lecture. Until then, humans, please grow more facial hair.

I'll second that. Come back next month for more simian science live and direct from a planet with lots of apes on it. If you have any tricky technical questions about PS2 send them to Dr Zeuss and Cornetto's Technological Laboratory at the usual PSM2 address. One question though: We found something strange in the Forbidden Zone. Explain the one you call Les Dennis to us. Until next time... ape shall never kill ape. PSM2

CASE STUDY

Brace yourself PS2 fans, this case study shows what happens when programmers can't keep their textures constant. Yes, it's the dreaded fog, long employed on the N64 and PSone to hide scenery that the console doesn't have the texture RAM available to display.

The short development time on *Ridge 5* for the Japanese launch of PS2 meant, in the two-player split screen mode, fogging had to be used to make it run at an acceptable speed. So you can see great textures close up which get blockier in the middle distance and disappear completely far away. Let's hope we never the mist of horror again on PS2...

ANIMAL TESTING!

Human simpletons! Come and sample some lovely PS2 textures in our lab! We promise not to lock the door this time. Or give you any 'vitamin' injections...

ROAD IN THE HOLE: Now that, my friends, is a lovely road texture. Add skid marks, build up textures on top and you're looking at a big ol' can of realism paint.

SOLID SHAPES: *MGS2* looks texture-tastic. Look at those, crates, the ship's deck, the stealth suit and even the great man's wet mullet.

ROBOT PHWOARS: While in the past giant robots have ended up with flat textures, here in Kojima's *Z.O.E.* PS2 power transforms them into gleaming, shiny doom-mongers. Ace.

CHANGING ROOMS: It's not spectacular, but look at the carefully done selection of different textures on the shell behind baldy.

STONE FREE: Free Radical's *TimeSplitters* doesn't skimp on different stone textures to build atmosphere. Stone-cladding gets a boost.

"PSM2 MEETS NUMBER TWOS - THORNY ISSUES EXPLORED ON THE THRONE"

INVESTIGATOR: Daniel Griffiths

THE LONG HARD DRIVE TO

Your PS2 is already a formidable beast, but what happens when you add 200Mb Prepare to be truly amazed...

The Hard Drive. Perfectly at home inside your PC. Or Mac. What the blazes is the point of putting one inside your PS2 then? A good question and one that has its fans and its detractors. For a while the PS2 Hard Drive may well herald a new era of gaming – but will the new, faster, vaster storage space be home to yet more quality gameplay or half-a-fathom of gaming guff? And will remnants of crumbly game code scupper your new games before you've even started? It's a situation fraught with mischief but the rewards are potentially mind-melting.

WHY GO HARD?

Currently your PS2 stores its game code on PS2 discs. These can be either PS2 format (650Mb) or DVD discs (up to 8Gb). You put in a disc, you switch on (or vice versa), the game loads into the memory and you're off – Bob is indeed your close relative. Had enough? You unplug your PS2, re-attach Granny's heated maxi-slipper and no-one's the wiser.

OK, now throw in 200Mb of super-fast hard disk storage into the equation. Imagine it. Suddenly it's like adding another 200Mb of memory! With fast enough seek times (the time it takes to get stuff off the hard disk) you could create a huge 200Mb graphical vista then, as you turn around, the next chunk of this new world is streamed into the paltry-looking 16Mb of video RAM before you know it. Or how about not so much saving your game but having the PS2 *remember* it? Next time you start up you could be treated to highlights of your previous match, and new goals automatically added to the 'goal-of-the-month' roster ons-board.

Then there're the huge possibilities that customising will introduce. How about designing new fighters for fighting games or tracks for driving games, all instantly accessible as if they were in the game in the first place? If you don't think you're up to the job yourself there's always the possibility of add-on discs, adding new features – or even the next episode of your RPG – on a regular basis to keep you hooked. And, once the broadband connectivity features kick off (see Bog Read PSM2#02) you'll be able to download this new entertainment straight to your machine without leaving the living room. Sounds great, doesn't it? But there are a few obstacles that Sony are going to have to overcome first.

HOGGING THE HARD DRIVE

OK, you've got a new game and you've got your Hard Drive add-on, but *Normski's Super Butter Funhouse* is programmed by lazy inconsiderate fools. You load it up and it craps all over your Hard Drive, hogging every inch of spare space for itself. But you don't know this. To you everything goes as planned – no more slow disc accessing, a marked improvement in textures and sound... sorted. But then you try to play another game and you realise you've lost all your saved games and the latest episode of Watchdog too. Ramping up the power of PS2 is a tricky business and no mistake.

STRAP-ON

In fact the whole horny, thorny issue of gaming prophylactics is fraught with misery and heartache. So, your 16bit machine is looking a bit long in the tooth – what do you do? Devise a £200 add-on that adds a CD drive. Oh, and another £130 add-on that makes it 32bit instead. Think we're making this crap up? Nope, this is what happened to Sega's Mega Drive. Once the nubile young filly of the console world, the Mega Drive spent its last six months hiding beneath two unpopular and expensive lumps of plastic like an aging porn queen.

Sure, the idea of the Mega CD (a CD drive for the Mega Drive, funnily enough) and the 32X (a stopgap, pre-Saturn box which gave the MD a 32bit processor) seemed like a good idea, but add-ons just don't work. Y'see, as soon as you say: 'to play this new supercharged game you need to buy this... and this...' you limit the number of people who have the hardware to play your game. The result? Nobody buys it and developers are loathed to make any more games for that require the new hardware. Which means that nobody buys the new hardware because there aren't any games for it. Beginning to get the idea? We could go on...

BUT PS2'S ADD-ON WILL BE DIFFERENT, YES?

You betcha. Mainly because Sony will be carefully monitoring how developers use the drive to prevent any mischief (Sony are mad keen on their hardware being easy to use and working first time), and also, because rather than rely on the intervention of third-party games programmers to come up with games that use the thing to drive sales, it'll be capable

BIG BOX POWER

JAPANESE DRIVE DISPLAYED - IT LOOKS A BIT CRAP

If you were designing a Hard Drive add-on for PS2 how would you make it look? A floating purple and black orb? A pyramid? Or perhaps a sultry, shapeless lava lamp-style blob?

Or how about a dull black box that looks like a PS2 after a going over by Dr Shrinko's incredible shrinking ray?

OK, so it does match (and means that your PS2 now looks like a clutch of mini-sky-scrapers), but it's hardly inspiring, is it? Especially considering it needs its own power supply and connects via a clumsy loop of cable to the PC card port on the back. Ouch. Fortunately the UK PS2 has a much sleeker system. See the main pic...

TO BE TAKEN INTERNALLY

UK AND AMERICAN PS2s SWALLOW IT WHOLE

Seems that the Japanese PS2 launch was a bit of a rush job all round. Not only were there not enough machines and some pretty lame games out there, but the devised method for attaching the Hard Drive is at best 'poor' and at worst a 'complete abortion'.

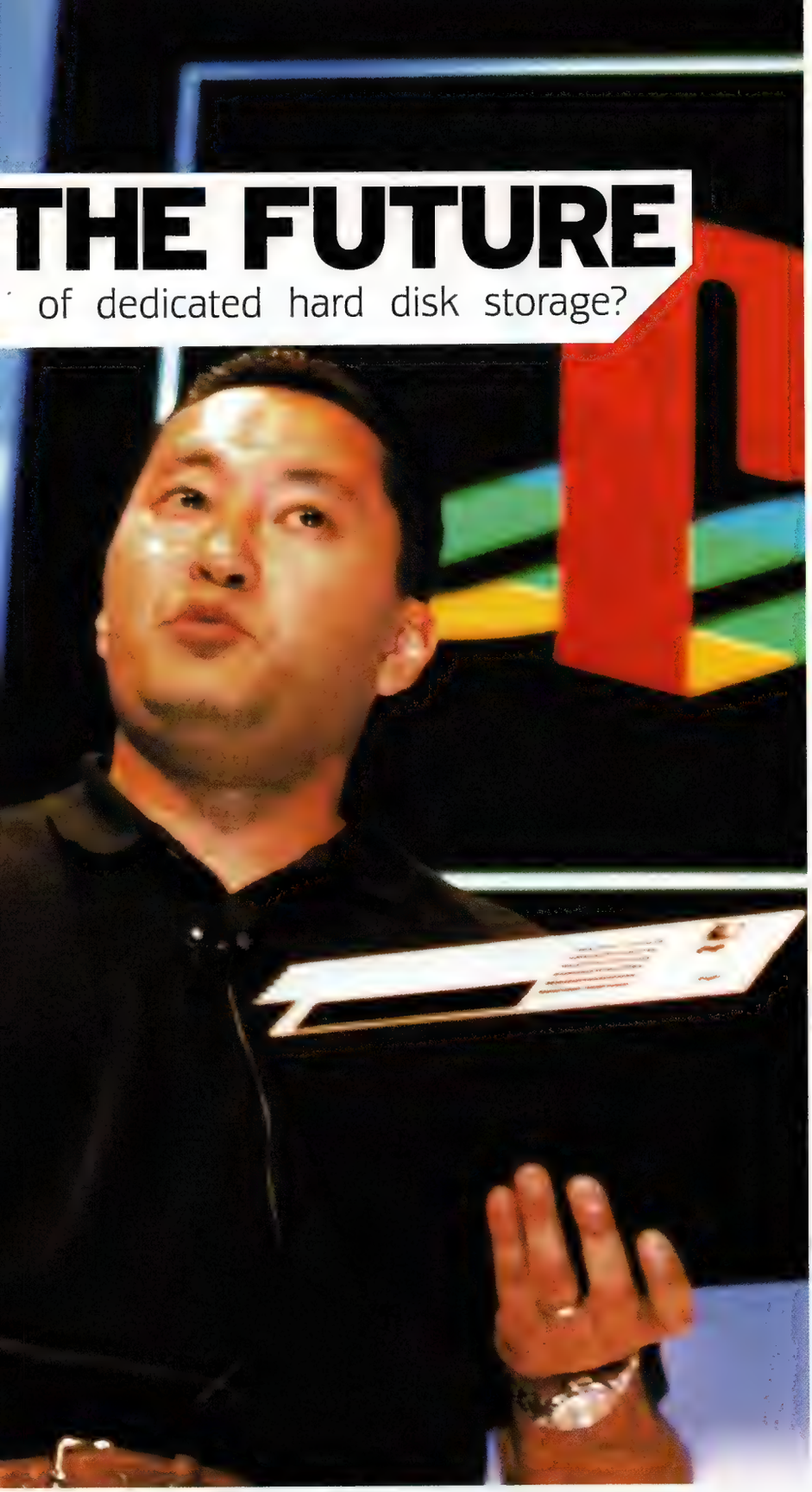
Not so in the UK and USA. By cleverly squishing up the innards of the PS2 (cutting costs and increasing production in the process – something Sony did a number of times throughout the PSone's life) they've created a gaping space inside the machine to allow the drive to be fitted internally! On the new machines a huge flap on the back hides a space the size of a Gideon bible into which the UK drive will fit seamlessly. Ah. That's more like it.

PROFILE: HARD DRIVE

- The Hard Drive will provide 200Mb of extra storage space for your PS2.
- It won't, however, provide a broadband link. That'll be a separate adaptor.
- Unlike the Japanese version that sits next to your PS2, the UK version will slot into the back (as Kazuo 'Kaz' Hirai, president of SCEA demonstrates above).
- You'll probably have to wait until 2002 to get your hands on it.

THE FUTURE

of dedicated hard disk storage?



EXTERNAL POLITICS: If you've got a Japanese machine, your Hard Disk has to sit outside...

TANGLED WEB: ... and relies on a separate power supply and an unwieldy connecting lead. Ugh.

"PLUG IN YOUR CAMERA AND YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DOWNLOAD YOUR WORK, ARSING ABOUT WITH IT TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT"

of myriad excitements fresh out of the box.

Yeah, some of this is wild speculation so far but how about this little beauty: being able to record video and sound to your PS2 Hard Drive. Forget setting the video, scrabbling around for a bit of blank videotape. Just let your PS2 know what you want recorded and it'll magically (digitally) store your chosen entertainments. Similarly how about being able to copy your CDs onto the box and compile your own playlists for playback later – or even as a soundtrack to your favourite game. Then upload the lot to your MP3 player. Plug in your videocamera or digital still camera and you'll be able to download your work to the Hard Drive, arse about with it to your heart's content and file it away.

It's when the Drive is connected to the outside world via the proposed broadband connection that it really comes into its own however.

With the Hard Drive in touch with the Sony central service you'll be able to download the latest episodes to your games, take part in huge RPGs with real life team-mates and enemies, and get at the latest movies and music available for download. Let it know what you like and when you come back there'll be a whole Hard Drive full of the stuff waiting for you...

OK, SO WHEN... AND HOW MUCH?

The answer to this is 'not yet' and hopefully 'cheap'. The whole situation is bogged down by Sony's refusal to indulge in analogue modems (which it views as being unreliable and too slow). They won't release a broadband add-on until enough homes have broadband connections (and PS2s) to make the venture worthwhile. And they won't want to release TWO add-ons (a Hard Drive and a broadband adaptor) so it looks as though the drive may have to wait until the broadband bit is established. A couple of years away, at least.

As for how much, well you can bet that it won't be more expensive than the original machine. Given all the factors in question our money's on a combined Hard Drive and broadband add-on for £200 sometime early 2002. Fingers crossed it'll be worth the wait. **PSM2**

BOG MOUTH!

THE INDUSTRY SPEAKS TO PSM2

Shameless profit-making add-on, or the key to gigantic strides forward in PS2 gaming experiences? We asked a game designer who knows such things. Don't forget – if you've got an opinion, write to us...

"The inclusion of a large and fast temporary storage device like this can only be a good thing for expanding the creative potential of PS2. There will be problems, but not really technical ones – the problems will be how to protect the intellectual property from pirates and the changes this brings in delivering the games you play on your PS2.

"Some people will prefer to pay for their games like they pay for airtime on their mobile phones, based on a pay-per-play system. So for example, to play a couple of hours of a game it would cost a couple of pounds. This will suit casual gamers. They will play a bigger variety of games and it will be relatively cheap to try each game.

"For games like *LMA Manager* people would buy the basic game and pay for the extra enhancements if and when they wanted them. So if you wanted to upgrade your European transfer market to include the South American countries you would buy that upgrade.

"In the future you will purchase the games on-line and they will be uploaded to your personal disk space. Your games collection will be on a server somewhere on the Internet. You can now play the game and a couple of days later you will receive your manual and if you want to pay the extra bit, a DVD copy of the game.

"If you think this sounds far fetched, take a look at sites like www.my.mp3.com, where you can already do this with music CDs..."

Simon Prytherch, Producer, LMA Manager, Codemasters

NEXT MONTH

WE LOOK AT PS2'S DVD ABILITIES

Digital Versatile Disc. Double the picture quality, up to 8Gb of storage space and seen as merely a sideshow on PS2. It was responsible for a massive boom in DVD film sales in Japan – will that happen here?

PSM2@FUTURENET.CO.UK

"Most people pick up the pad and try to drive the ships as if they were cars – and it just don't work!"

ROB FRANCIS

THE LEAD DESIGNER OF WIPEOUT FUSION

Talks to Daniel Dawkins

His colleagues call him a "sexy bastard". His games scream visual opulence. Cutting a long story short, Rob Francis is *the* Barry White of videogame design. With the power of PS2 allowing *WipEout* to strike out in bold new directions, who better to reveal the tasty new additions to the series? Can the game truly surpass its origins despite the lack-lustre PSone sequels? Are the promises of free-form racing really true? And will *WipEout* be racing into an on-line future? Aarrrgh, we canna take nee more. Let the walrus of loving design ease your troubles...

SOME GAMERS WILL THINK THEY'VE SEEN IT ALL BEFORE AND MIGHT BE EXPECTING THE SAME WIPEOUT EXPERIENCE WITH A LICK OF PS2 GLOSS. HOW WILL YOU MAKE THESE PEOPLE SIT UP AND TAKE NOTICE?

When PlayStation 2 owners finally get their hands on *WipEout Fusion*, they'll be able to experience the difference. This game was created from the ground up specifically for PS2. As such, it's a different cookie.

It's still the *WipEout* game we know but it 'feels' different. Quite a lot. The biggest difference play-wise is that you can now fly on upside-down courses. In fact, *any* orientation of course – the ship hugs the track when you fly over the brow of a hill and down a vertical drop. You get a lot of rollercoaster feelings when you're playing the game.

DESPITE TELLING PSM2 LAST ISSUE ABOUT THE GAME RUNNING SO FAST THAT YOU HAD TO SLOW THINGS DOWN, YOU'VE STILL PROMISED "SOMETHING SPECIAL" FOR SPEED FREAKS? EXACTLY WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

The 'beasts' are currently being tamed to around 1500kph – and there's a real-life scale in the game, so it really is 1500kph... but they're begging to go even faster! I've been playing one of the new Van-Uber Racing ships at around 2000kph and it's quite scary, but Nev (co-designer) can't get enough of it.

THE GAME HAS 48 LEVELS OF ANALOGUE CONTROL COMPARED TO SEVEN IN THE LAST GAME. HOW WILL GAMERS FEEL THIS LEVEL OF DIFFERENCE

What you'll notice is lots of different handling ships. We want to cater for all types of *WipEout* players – those that like the weighty feeling ships, those that like light, manoeuvrable ships etc. We can basically set up the roll, turn and air braking systems for each ship independently, whereas on the previous games they were all linked in together.

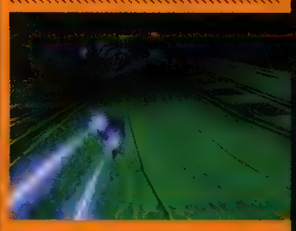
You'll also notice is how smooth the ships are. This is down to the fact that we are running at 60fps. But not just that. The physics engine for the ships does 2 passes for every frame – ie 120 per second, compared to 30 per second on the previous *WipEout* game – and this makes the ships unbelievably silky smooth.

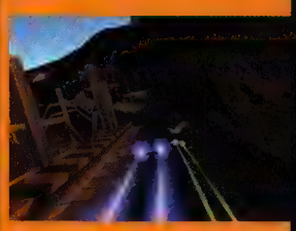
WE'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT THE GAME'S ADVANCED AI, SUCH AS THE WAY THAT AGGRESSIVE PILOTS ARE BULLIED AND SHOT AT. WHAT OTHER BEHAVIOURAL RESPONSES WILL YOUR RIVALS EXHIBIT?

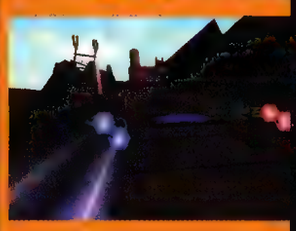
Team pilots will pull to the side to allow you to pass if you're on good terms with them! We are teaching the pilots blocking skills and overtaking skills, including advanced overtaking skills like dummying. Fly on another pilots tail and hassle him loads and he may break under the pressure and make some errors.

PROFILE
STUDIO LIVERPOOL

- **PRODUCER – Trevor Jones**
  Known as the fat controller. Likes anti-gravity trains.
- **ART MANAGER – Colin Price**
  Loves movies and beating team members with a Maori club. Tumera Morisson has much to answer for.
- **PROGRAMMING MANAGER – Steve Pointon**
  Smooth and sexy, with 12 inches more than Rob, apparently. We don't care.
- **DESIGNER – Nevin Gaston**
  Says *WipEout Fusion* is the best game he's ever worked on. Bless 'im.
- **ARTIST – Garvan Corbett**
  A Psygnosis man of 15 years. Likes the Internet and nudity. Wicked combo.







YOU'VE SAID THAT WIPEOUT FUSION IS THE CLOSEST YOU HAVE COME TO YOUR ORIGINAL VISION OF THE GAME. WHAT ELEMENTS NEED TO BE ADDED BEFORE THAT VISION IS COMPLETE?

A longer schedule! There's still quite a bit to do, so who knows – it may be a perfect vision! But then I'm a designer, so I'm always optimistic about that.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT WIPEOUT FUSION FEATURES MUSIC FROM A MIXTURE OF UNKNOWN AND ESTABLISHED ARTISTS. WHAT FACTORS DETERMINED YOUR FINAL CHOICE OF ARTISTS AND IS THERE ANYONE ELSE YOU WOULD'VE LIKED TO INCLUDE?

The number one directive of the musical direction is to sign music that enhances the atmosphere of the game – ie it gets you well into the zone. In addition, we will be signing some big name acts to help twist people's arms into playing the game, just in case they needed any extra persuasion! The mixture of these means we should have a fantastic soundtrack which any fan would quite simply kill to get their hands on.

YOU'VE SAID THAT THE WIPEOUT GAMES WERE BECOMING COMMERCIAL AND THAT YOU WANTED TO MOVE THINGS BACK UNDERGROUND. WHAT WAS GOING WRONG AND HOW WILL YOU RESTORE THE BRAND'S EDGY STREET CREDIBILITY?

One thing we've learnt is *WipEout* is a challenging game and, as such, it excludes people who are basically 'not up to it'. Most people pick up the pad and try to drive the ships as if they were cars – and it just don't work! *WipEout* has a unique handling system and a little investment of time is needed to get used to it. Now, I have the opposite problem – I always pick up *Gran Turismo* and wonder why the airbrakes don't work and how to launch a quake...

METAL GEAR SOLID 2 HAS GIVEN US SUGGESTIONS, BUT WHEN PS2 HITS FULL FLIGHT, HOW DO YOU THINK ITS POWER WILL BE APPLIED TO CREATE INNOVATIVE AND EXPANSIVE GAMEPLAY EXPERIENCES? HOW WOULD YOU APPLY THESE ELEMENTS IN YOUR DREAM GAME... AND NOT JUST A WIPEOUT ONE.

Well I've got some ideas on this, but they're just so damn commercially sexy, that I can't divulge them! Generally speaking, I think we will see higher and higher levels of immersion into PS2 games. Immersion is created on all levels of input and output devices. A lot of games will focus on reality – and I'm not just talking about looks – feel, sound, reactions etc. And then a lot of games will focus on an alternative reality – a reality that is different to ours, but a reality that works and is believable – I think that may be quite an exciting area.

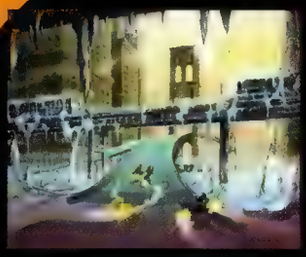
FOUR-PLAYER MULTI-PLAYER GAMING IS BEING MOOTED. WILL THIS COMPROMISE THE LEVELS OF SPEED AND DETAIL? WHAT ASPECTS MAY HAVE TO BE SACRIFICED TO KEEP THINGS RUNNING SMOOTHLY?

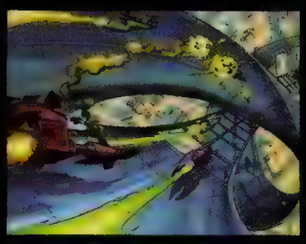
When you're at maximum rendering power on a one-player game mode, obviously something has to give when you start multiplying the burden on the graphics chips by two, three or four times. Our directive is simple – there's no way we will let the speed of the game drop. We are implementing several systems which should mean the visual quality doesn't drop either. ▶

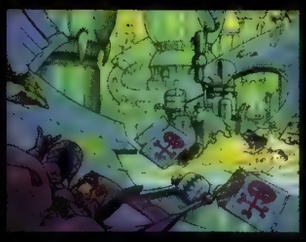
"They're begging to go faster"

are currently being tamed
and there's real life scale as
it really is 150

ROB FRANCIS







▸AT OUR LAST MEETING, YOU DISCUSSED A CHOICE OF VERTICAL/HORIZONTAL SPLIT SCREEN TWO-PLAYER MODES. IS THIS FEATURE NOW IN PLACE AND WILL IT ALSO APPLY TO THREE- OR FOUR-PLAYER GAMES?

We have planned a total of five multi-player game modes. One of these is completely new and has never been seen in a *WipEout* game before. Four of the multi-player game modes are playable split screen, either vertically or horizontally. The code hasn't quite gone in yet so I can't comment further on this at the moment.

THE GAME IS SAID TO BE MOVING CLOSER TO ITS EUROPEAN ROOTS, AWAY FROM THE TRADITIONAL JAPANESE STYLINGS. HOW WILL THESE DIFFERENCES MANIFEST THEMSELVES?

On the graphic design front, we are not working with Designers Republic on *WipEout Fusion*. We have a new graphic design house, Good Technology. They are creating the overall look and style of the game within our directives. I'm hoping everyone will find it pretty cool.

A LOT OF NEW OR TWEAKED WEAPONS HAVE BEEN PROMISED, ESPECIALLY IN THE MULTI-PLAYER MODES. WHICH WEAPONS SHOULD PEOPLE BE MOST EXCITED ABOUT? WILL WE SEE ANYTHING SPECIAL IN THE PARTICLE AND LIGHTING EFFECTS DEPARTMENT?

Yes and Yes! We are just getting going on the weapons right now so it's a little early to talk about them. What I can tell you is that we have a total of 26 weapons planned for *WipEout Fusion*, split into 13 standard weapons, eight super weapons and five multi-player weapons.

THE CHALLENGE MODE HAS SPECIAL TEAM-SPECIFIC WEAPONS FOR PLAYERS TO UNLOCK. COULD YOU OUTLINE THE NATURE OF THESE CHALLENGES?

I'm looking forward to this mode a lot. The player selects a team and has to undergo a series of challenges to be worthy of the team's super-weapon licence. This licence unlocks super-weapon ability for that team's ships in any game mode. Each of the super weapons are individually designed and really powerful, so they make big differences to races. There are six types of challenge planned, some seen in previous *WipEouts* (*WipEout 3* and *WipEout 64*) and some new ones. You might be asked to take out all the pilots of a particular team in a race or survive three laps with 50% shield energy and the pit lane deactivated!

PS2'S POWER SHOULD ALLOW FOR SOME PRETTY SPECTACULAR TRACKSIDE SCENERY. WHAT DIVERSITY OF TERRAIN AND INDIGENOUS SPECIAL TOUCHES SHOULD WE EXPECT IN THE LEVELS?

The tracks were one of the first things we designed (*Art Ed's note: see sketches in column*). The idea was to come up with an array of settings with features that'd blend with the track designs themselves. Secondly, we wanted to create big environments and have three different courses running around them, each course having its own visual and gameplay features, but blending with the whole environment.

An example of this is the Australian environment. It's set in a quarry in the rocky outback. The first track starts at the base of the quarry and rises up thousands of feet above to the edges of the quarry. At the top edge of the quarry is a wooden bridge which you race across, but it can be taken out with the quake weapon to reveal a short-cut running along the cliff edge. The second track runs straight into an underground mine. This is the most un-*WipEout* of courses. It's full of twists, splits, convergences, split levels and jumps. In short, there're 101 ways through it!

The third track splits off of the first track when you're at the top of the quarry. You go into a section that has loads of beehive mountains with track running around them – you basically have to jump from one beehive to the next.

THE GAME WILL OPERATE A CASH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TO REWARD SUCCESSFUL PILOTS. WHAT ATTRIBUTES CAN BE UPGRADED AND HOW WILL THEY BENEFIT THE PILOT?

The six upgrades are speed, acceleration, lateral stability, braking, weapon power and shield power. Speed and acceleration will obviously be beneficial to races, but players will want to be careful not to imbalance their ship too much. Upgrading the lateral stability (how much sideways movement you get when cornering) and braking will be important though.

Upgrading weapon power will, no doubt, be another favourite if destruction is your game! And upgrading shield power will mean less trips into the pit lane for recharging. Each of the ships has its own unique upgrade path, based on its strengths and weaknesses.

A LOT OF WORK HAS FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING THE HISTORY AND CHARACTERISATION OF THE TEAMS AND DRIVERS. WHAT WILL BE THE MAIN DIFFERENCES/MERITS IN SELECTING CERTAIN TEAMS OVER OTHERS?

Each team's ships will have a unique feel to their handling. A lot of teams are not available to the player at the start of the game. The reason for this is that as you unlock the new teams' ships, they get better and better. They get faster, more powerful and are more upgradable.

HOW WILL THE NEW TRACK FEATURES SUCH AS THE 360 DEGREE LOOPS AND GRAVITY FLIP PADS AFFECT THE GAME-PLAY? WILL THEY ACT AS SHORT-CUTS FOR SAVVY GAMERS?

Both of these features don't affect the controls – they only affect your stomach! In the early days of design, we wanted the game to be quite extreme in regards to what it did with the player, but not at the expense of playability. As such, both of these features give you that stomach-churning feeling of being upside-down, but the gameplay remains pretty much the same – the camera stays with the ship, so you don't have to reverse your left and right steering or anything like that.

THERE'S TALK OF DVD EXTRAS IN THE FINISHED GAME – WHAT DIRECTION WOULD YOU LIKE THESE TO TAKE?

Yep, we've got a number of options lined up for this. Unfortunately, I can't release any details at the moment.

ENDA CAREY (FUSION'S 'BRAND MANAGER') HAS SAID THAT WORKING ON WIPEOUT HAS MADE HIM MAD, SAD, HAPPY AND PISSED. WHAT'S BEEN YOUR OVERRIDING EMOTION DURING WORK ON WIPEOUT FUSION?

We have a very creative, talented team of people. Personally, I've been very ambitious with this project from the start. It's been a difficult project in a some respects – more production than creative. The most exciting times for me were the at the start of the project when planning all the new juicy features and right now when the game is finally coming together.

YOU SAY THAT A LOT OF GAMERS' SUGGESTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS GAMES HAVE BEEN INCLUDED – WHAT EXACTLY HAS GONE IN?

"Don't do another *WipEout* game on PSone" was one of them! Only joking. I certainly always look to find out feedback on ship handling. The HUD has been an important issue for us, as has the difficulty of the tracks and musical tastes of the players.

WHEN SONY ANNOUNCE THEIR BROADBAND PLANS, WHAT WILL BE YOUR HOPES FOR FUTURE WIPEOUTS, AND ON-LINE GAMING IN GENERAL?

I'm looking forward to a starting grid of 20 human players! I'd like to see some on-line tournaments and for players to be able to automatically view the global hall of fame and update their times into it. I'd like to be able to create my own team and ships and enter them into races. And I'd like to be able to create my own tracks and leagues and put them on-line for others to play. **PSM2**

YOU'VE BEEN CRITICAL OF PROGRAMMERS WHO'VE COMPLAINED ABOUT THE COMPLEX ARCHITECTURE OF PS2. WHAT TRICKS HAVE YOU DISCOVERED TO GET THE MACHINE TO SING?

I don't think we've been critical of programmers who have complained about the complex architecture of PS2, the architecture is challenging but I think the games shown so far speak for themselves in showing that developers are quickly getting to grips with PS2. Ever since we first started on PS2 our goal has been to deliver a game with a blistering 60fps so we have focused greatly on utilising all of the power that the PS2 provides us with. We have therefore carefully distributed all the game processes over the available processors to give us the best performance possible. Other than that all I would say is optimise, optimise and then optimise some more.

CRUISIN' FOR A FUSION: You'll be able to play Rob's finished game in March.

DON'T MISS THIS!

ULTIMATE COVERAGE

PS2 ARRIVES!

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UNREAL TOURNAMENT

In-depth playtest of one of the most exhilarating FPS titles ever created...

PLUS!

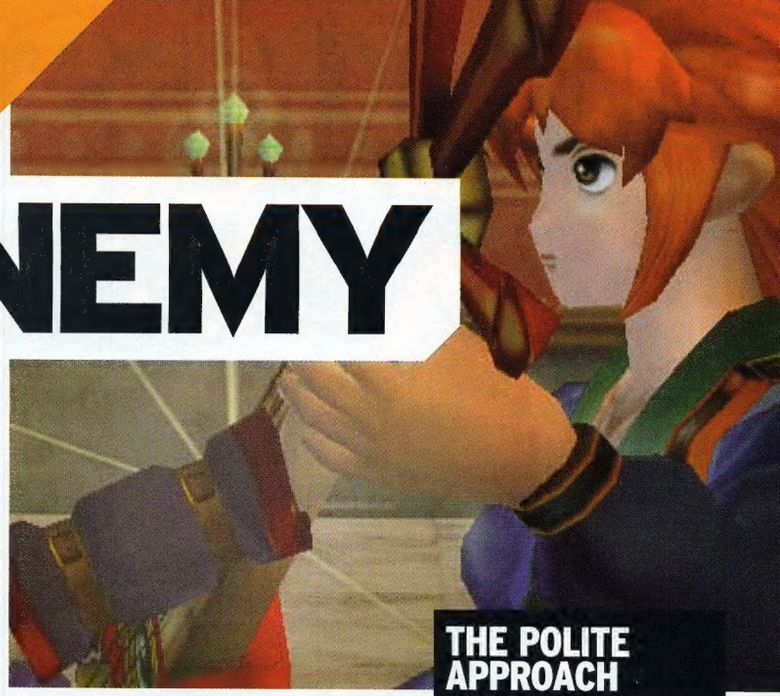
SUMMONER

More details and shots from one of the most hotly anticipated PlayStation 2 RPGs. Can it live up to the hype? We tell you.

ALL IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

PSM2 #04 ON SALE THURSDAY NOVEMBER 23

PUBLIC ENEMY



We try desperately to get *Ephemeral Fantasia's* hero some notoriety.

BY: Danny Wallace

It must be an incredibly tiresome existence, that of the videogame good guy. Having to skip along through enchanted forests, or spend your days looking for princesses, or have no one to talk to except for a tiny magic sidekick dog. No excitement. No surprises. No *controversy*.

We remember the good old days of videogaming. The days where you couldn't switch your 16bit console on without a preacher from the deep South bursting into your bedroom and telling you that you'd spend the rest of your days in hell if you so much as *thought* about a quick burst of *Night Trap* on your Mega CD. Mind you, you'd have been hard pressed to have noticed the difference between the two if you did...

CONTROVERSY

We remember when slapping a *Mortal Kombat* cart into your SNES would bring up a bunch of exciting, heavily-pixellated, animated corpses who'd jerk their way around the screen and unconvincingly bat at each other's faces. It wasn't so much the game that made it compelling... more the controversy surrounding it. One character would uppercut another, there'd be a flash of red (blood, we think), and a small, jagged round thing would lie on the other side of the screen. We'd assume it was a head, but from the graphics, it could very easily have been a lady's tit.

And yet dodgy displays like this would be enough to have parental advisory stickers bandied about, talk of censorship, and articles in every games mag in the country asking whether videogames were destroying the nation's youth. It's no coincidence that Andy Crane's 'Bad Influence' show was cancelled soon after *Mortal Kombat 2* made its first appearance. We think the grown-ups saw the bloodlust in evil Andy's eyes.

Nowadays, though, it's died down, and it's harder than ever for good-guy characters to get noticed. It'd be terrible to be, for example, Mouse, from *Ephemeral Fantasia*. Look at his bloody name, for a start. At least he tries to be controversial: he's a thief. Sadly, though, he more than compensates for that by playing the lute quite well and at any available bloody opportunity. Yep, Mouse is pretty much doomed to a life of non-controversial gameplay. Unless his designers give him a wife and let him beat her while the words "good" and "hero" flash brightly on the screen.

We wanted to help Mouse. We wanted to get him noticed. Or hated. At least disliked a little. It became clear... we had to get him banned.

INTERNATIONAL CHAOS

The first thing we did was write to the people who are happy to stand up for the rights of the good and proper... a high street cosmetics store famed for their stance against animal testing. The letter we sent to our local branch is on the right of this page, and you'd have thought this would stir the feelings of the careworn manager, but no. She didn't bother writing back at all. An e-mail to Amnesty International saying "Hello I am Mouse. I think you're all really silly, as is what you are doing. Please get in touch if you would like to boycott me!" yielded just as little. Same with Greenpeace. What was wrong with the world?

Maybe we were going about this the wrong way. We needed advice. So we e-mailed the government. "Dear The Government," we began, "How can I be boycotted or condemned by you? I am a young musician looking to gain notoriety, and thought that perhaps if I could achieve the disapproval of the government (even just one minister would do), it might help me in my chosen path. I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible, Mouse. PS. I am also a thief."

Five minutes later, an automated response thanked us for our interest and assured us that our comments would be taken seriously. Hopefully, that means they'll do a pamphlet on how to be boycotted, or something.

Two days later and there was still no word on the pamphlet. Perhaps the British government was a little busy. So we decided to try and make the fight international, but to concentrate on a country with enough time on its hands to take our consideration seriously. Bahrain called out to us from across the seas. We found the government of Bahrain's website, and left a message for its politicians.

HOORAH FOR BAHRAIN

But then we got worried; perhaps we weren't getting through because all we'd done was write letters and e-mails. Oh yes, it's all very well for Amnesty International to bang on about how we should all write letters all the time, but as soon as you want them to write back, they go all lazy on you. We decided to call a local charity office and see if we could convince someone, person-to-person. We tried. They weren't interested. Again, they ponce about like a charity all year round, but if *you* want a favour they can't be arsed with it.

But then! Eureka! An e-mail back from someone at the Government of Bahrain. "Dear Mouse, thanks you for your message. You proposal sounds very interesting but we are unsure what you really mean. Can you please clarify it for us when you have chance," and, at the end of the message, a private e-mail address for someone's assistant at the government! This is it! We'd cracked it! Surely now it was only a matter of time before Bahrain condemned Mouse for his behaviour and the news swept through the Middle East like wildfire, picking up support from all and sundry and putting pressure on the likes of America to follow, or face international warfare!

We're keeping our fingers crossed on this one... it'd be *amazing* if we could start a war... but hey, in the meantime... why not try getting *your* favourite fictional character banned by an entire country? PSM2

"WE WANTED TO HELP MOUSE... WE WANTED TO GET HIM BANNED"

THE PERSONAL APPROACH

This, friends, is a transcript of the telephone conversation we attempted to have with a volunteer of a local charity shop. We really thought we'd get a result here, one well-meaning citizen helping another out. Honestly, these people just don't understand us, do they?

Hello, the ***** ****** Organisation, M*** speaking.
Hi, sorry, I'd better introduce myself. My name's Mr Mouse, I've been a huge fan of your particular charity and all that stuff you've been doing for a few months now, but couldn't help noticing that you boycott a few companies and organisations from time to time.
Uh-huh, when necessary, yeah.
And that this tends to get the attention of the media when it happens.
Yeah, it does, of course it does.
Yes, absolutely. And I was thinking – because at the moment I'm facing a bit of an obscurity problem – that maybe you... y'know, could do that for me.
Sorry?
Well, I was thinking that maybe you could boycott *me*.
Boycott?
Me.
(Pause)
Sorry, sir, why are you phoning us today?
My name is Mouse and I'm a travelling musician and thief.
Thief?
That's right. Are you against thieving?
Live and let live, sir.
Because if you're against thieving we could always use that in the boycotting.
I... Why do you want us to boycott you?
I just do. It wouldn't take long! Just a few short well-placed soundbites to the media. G'wan.
I'm going to hang up, now.
C'mon – I need you as much as you need me, y'know.
(Click)
Ah.

THE POLITE APPROACH

The letter we sent to the high street cosmetics store, of whom you would really have expected a response... *sigh*...

Dear the manager of my local The B*** S***,
My name is Mouse, and I am a wandering musician and thief. I recently stole some shampoo from my local branch of your shop, and was excited to test it out on both myself and my pet rabbit, Mark. However, I accidentally got some in Mark's eyes, and he was in severe pain for several minutes.

I was shocked to see that on the back of the bottle, it said that you hadn't tested the product on animals. I feel that if only you could be bothered to test these products out *properly* before you send them to the shops, tragedies like this would not occur.

I have therefore begun testing your products out on all my animals, so that we get this sorted. If you don't like what I'm doing, please feel free to boycott me, or generally tell the nation that you don't like me very much. Seriously – you can boycott me if you like. If you would like to write to some papers or tell some television people that you disapprove of me that would be good, as it would help me gain some notoriety.
Thank you,
Mouse

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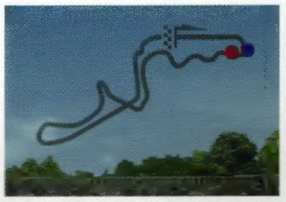

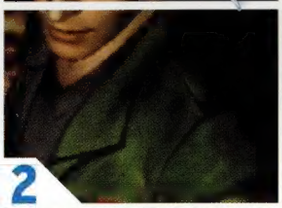

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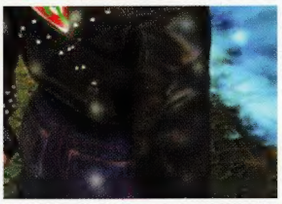
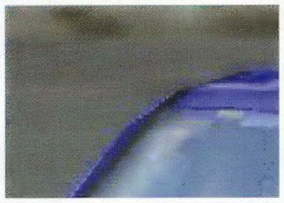
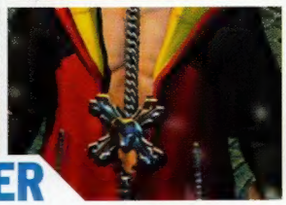
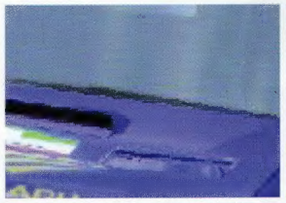






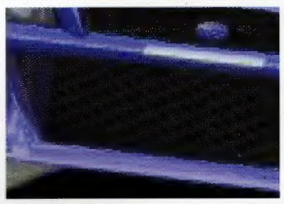
THE BOUNCER



PSM2

Shoe-horned into this issue is every game that'll be out for the UK launch of PlayStation 2. We guide you to the titles you should be most excited about. Plus, pages and pages of new PS2 previews and reviews!

PLAYING PLAYSTATION 2 LONGER, HARDER, FASTER



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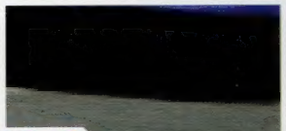

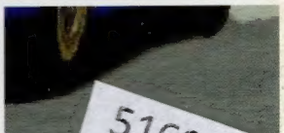

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